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**The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in Basic Education Policy  
Reform in Lusaka Province of Zambia**

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**PhD**

**The University of Edinburgh**

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**Declaration**

I, Peggy Mwanza, do hereby declare:

1. that this thesis has been created by me, and
2. that the work is the product of my own effort, and
3. that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or profession qualification

Signature:.....

Date: .....

## **Abbreviations**

<b>EFA</b>	<b>Education for All</b>
<b>FAWEZA</b>	<b>Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia</b>
<b>GRZ</b>	<b>Government of the Republic of Zambia</b>
<b>IFI</b>	<b>International Financial Institution</b>
<b>IMF</b>	<b>International Monetary Fund</b>
<b>INGOs</b>	<b>International Non-Governmental Organisations</b>
<b>JASZ</b>	<b>Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia</b>
<b>MDGs</b>	<b>Millennium Development Goals</b>
<b>MMD</b>	<b>Movement for Multiparty Democracy</b>
<b>MOE</b>	<b>Ministry of Education</b>
<b>NGOs</b>	<b>Non-Governmental Organisations</b>
<b>ODA</b>	<b>Official Development Assistance</b>
<b>OECD</b>	<b>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</b>
<b>PCC</b>	<b>Project Coordination Committee</b>
<b>SAG</b>	<b>Sector Advisory Group</b>
<b>SWAPs</b>	<b>Sector Wide Approaches</b>
<b>UN</b>	<b>United Nations</b>

<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nations Development Programme</b>
<b>UNESCO</b>	<b>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</b>
<b>UNICEF</b>	<b>United Nations Children’s Fund</b>
<b>UNIP</b>	<b>United National Independence Party</b>
<b>UPE</b>	<b>Universal Primary Education</b>
<b>USAID</b>	<b>United States Agency for International Development</b>
<b>WTO</b>	<b>World Trade Organisation</b>
<b>ZANEC</b>	<b>Zambia National Education Coalition</b>
<b>ZOCS</b>	<b>Zambia Open Community Schools</b>

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## **Dedication**

### **My mum and late dad**

Thank you forever for truly sacrificing your own welfare to provide for me knowledge. Mum, there is no way I can pay you back but the plan is to show you that I understand and that you are greatly appreciated.

## **ABSTRACT**

Through an exploration and analysis of the roles of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in education policy reform particularly at the Basic Education level in Zambia, this thesis argues that over the past few decades, NGOs have become increasingly visible. Indeed, since the 1990s, many NGOs supporting education have entered the arena of advocacy and policy dialogue with government; yet the success of internationally recognised goals - such as Education For All (EFA) – seem as remote as ever.

To address the concern regarding the role of NGOs in education policy, qualitative methodological approaches were utilised. These included interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions and documentary analysis.

This research finds that the participation of NGOs in Basic Education Policy Reform in Zambia needs to be “reformulated” to end problems concerning access, inequity and quality in education.

Although NGOs are involved in policy through their roles as service providers and policy advocates, the majority depend on foreign donor funding which creates tensions between government strategies and donor priorities. Due to their dependence on international funding NGOs in Lusaka province appear to have made a limited contribution to educational developments. The government of Zambia, because of its indebtedness, has accepted neo-liberal policies in education which are frequently tied to conditionalities in aid packages. Therefore, it has been found that NGOs have helped the neo-liberal agenda of donors rather than the needs of local communities and schools.

The conclusion one must draw, is that if NGOs are to contribute to minimising educational problems, they need to support policies that are indigenous that put educational needs of all children, especially the marginalised and vulnerable, first.



## **INTRODUCTION**

For decades issues related to Universal Basic Education have been the concern of many nations across the globe. All appear to support the achievement of Education for All (EFA). From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, which declared that every person has the right to education and called for compulsory elementary education (UNESCO, 2000) up to the International Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 (UNESCO, 1990), governments of both developed and developing countries committed themselves to providing Universal Basic Education. The Jomtien Conference was followed by the Dakar World Education Conference held in Senegal, in the year 2000 (UNESCO, 2000) where governments across the globe renewed their commitment to providing Education for All. Also the Jomtien and the Dakar World Education Conferences called for partnership in education with the view to achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) by the years, 2000 and 2015 respectively (UNESCO, 2000). In Zambia, the Ministry of Education encourages private sector and Non-governmental Organisation participation in the provision of Basic education and improvement of its quality (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Indeed, Zambia like many other developing countries, has seen the growth of Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs). However, access, equity, retention and quality problems in education have persisted in spite of NGO presence in Zambia. The majority, if not all, of these NGOs, depend on international donor funding. Aid dependency in developing countries has increased over the last few decades and this is problematic for the national implementation of EFA goals by both state and non-state

actors (Strutt and Kepe, 2010). For NGOs involved in education, dependence on external funding has its own structures and limitations. Gyimah-Boadi (2004) explains that most of the civil society organisations (CSOs) including NGOs associated with development tend to be funded by international donors, a relationship which is said by scholars such as Gyimah-Boadi (2004) and Ilon (2008) to threaten their autonomy, integrity, and independence. As the number of CSOs and NGOs has grown tremendously in the past few decades in many developing countries, it is the international NGOs and aid agencies that have come to support the bulk of local development projects. This dependency on donor funds has also come to mean that CSO interests (NGOs included) are more in line with those of international NGOs and donors than with those of local populations because of their financial dependence (Dibie, 2008).

This thesis provides an understanding and evaluation of the role of NGOs in Basic Education with reference to policy reform in Zambia through looking at Lusaka province. As it was seen in this research, Lusaka is the headquarters of policy-making in Zambia. As a result, what is decided in Lusaka is normally rolled over to the rest of Zambia. This thesis investigates the different roles played by national and international NGOs in the policy-making process and implementation of EFA goals. This research addresses a key concern as there is very little academic research pertaining to the role of NGOs in education policy reform in Zambia. Indeed, in Zambia there has been lack of published research on the roles of NGOs in education policy.

## **Aim of the Research**

To investigate the role of NGOs in shaping and influencing education policy reform in Basic Education in Lusaka province of Zambia.

The major question guiding the study is: Does the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform enhance the achievement of EFA in Lusaka province of Zambia? In order to build a complete answer to the main question, there are specific questions that guided the research:

- Who are the major local and global players i.e. stakeholders in education policy making and implementation in Zambia?
- What role are NGOs playing in education policy with regards to Basic Education?
- What motivates NGOs to be education policy advocates?
- How do the different stakeholders such as local communities, teachers, headteachers and government officials perceive NGOs and their role in education policy in Basic Education?

## **Thesis structure**

The chapters that follow focus on addressing the issues raised in the research questions above. It is hoped that the research will contribute towards scholarship around NGOs and education policy from a Southern perspective.

In Chapter One I set out the context of this study. I describe the key contextual characteristics and challenges that have implications for education policy in Zambia. I detail the political context and the importance of human and financial resources. These characteristics, it will be argued, pose substantial limitations on education in Zambia. Also considered are the meaning, scope and aims of Basic Education with particular attention to Zambia. There is also an examination of educational developments at the basic school level in Zambia both prior to and after the attainment of political independence in 1964. The chapter ends with a discussion of educational problems in developing countries with specific reference to Zambia.

Chapter Two begins with an examination of global concerns on Basic Education. International Conferences such as Jomtien and Dakar held in 1990 and 2000 respectively are highlighted. Human Capital and Human Rights Approaches to education are also discussed. The chapter ends by outlining the theoretical framework upon which the empirical investigation is conducted. Here I look into the model of neo-liberalism and its effects on education. I analyse in detail the role of neo-liberalism in perpetuating inequities in education. I then analyse impacts of market driven policies in Zambia, especially on education policy and the role of national and international NGOs in a global market economy.

In Chapter Three I examine the work of NGOs. I start by exploring the meaning of the term Non-Governmental Organisation and considering the features that characterise it. Thereafter, an examination of the historical growth of NGOs draws attention to the roles and functions of NGOs. Subsequently, the focus narrows down to the developmental activities of NGOs in relation to the state and donors.

Chapter Four considers the methodological issues dealt with in carrying out the empirical research in Lusaka province of Zambia. I develop my methodological resources for engaging in research in the light of my theoretical positioning. I explain my epistemological and ontological positioning and the theoretical resources that I draw upon. I also explain in detail other theoretical frameworks that guided this research and the reasons for the choice of such frameworks. An overview of how the fieldwork was conducted is also given such as the construction and administration of research instruments, issues regarding ensuring trustworthiness of this study and ethical issues.

Chapter Five presents the research findings. Here, I document the voices of stakeholders in the Zambian education sector such as policy-makers, NGO officers, academics and parents.

In Chapters Six and Seven I focus on the analysis of the fieldwork data. It is suggested that NGOs play a key role in education policy in Zambia. However, it has been found that there are usually countervailing forces at work that limit their effectiveness.

Chapter Eight provides a summary of research findings and offers some recommendations. Here areas that require further research are also highlighted.

I now turn to chapter one for an overview of the context of this study.

## **Chapter 1**

### **The Context of the Study and the Development of Basic Education in Zambia**

#### **1.0. Introduction**

This chapter describes the context of the study. The first and second sections present a general background to the country of Zambia. A brief account of the geographical location of the study area and the socio-economic characteristics of Zambia including the structure of the education system and the meaning and scope of Basic education are given. The next section presents the development of education in Zambia, giving a background to the origins and development of Basic education during the Colonial era. This is followed by an analysis of educational developments at the basic school level in Zambia after the attainment of independence. Finally, educational problems in developing countries with specific reference to Zambia are discussed.

#### **1.1. General Background of the study area : Zambia**

Zambia is located in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is a landlocked country surrounded by eight other countries namely: Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Democratic Republic of Congo, United Republic of Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Angola. Map 1 below shows the location of Zambia in Southern Africa and its neighbouring countries. Zambia is a former colony of Britain and gained independence on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1964.

Map 1: Zambia and its Neighbouring Countries



Source: <http://www.zambia-mining.com/country.html>

Map 2 below is showing the administrative divisions of Zambia.



**Map 2: Map showing Administrative Divisions of Zambia**



**Source:** <http://www.zambia-mining.com/country.html>

The map above shows nine administrative divisions of Zambia, however, recently in 2011, a new administrative region was added, and now the country is divided into ten regions or provinces. Zambia covers 752, 614 square kilometres and lies in the tropical belt of South Central Africa

(<http://geography.about.com/library/cia/blczambia.htm>).

The population of Zambia stood at 9.9 million in 2000 of which 65 percent lived in rural areas, and was estimated at 13.3 million in 2010 (Ministry of Finance and National Planning:2003:2, Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2011:21).

“Zambia has a young and dependant population, with 46.0 percent of the population

being under the age of 15” (Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2011:21). Therefore, this implies that a big percentage of the population is dependent on the government for the provision of resources to enjoy basic rights such as good health and education.

The poverty levels in Zambia are high. 68 percent of the Zambian population fell below the national poverty line (i.e. 68 percent of the population of Zambia was poor) in 2004 (Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2006:2). As the Ministry of Finance and National Planning (2006) in Zambia reports,

Changes in poverty during 1998 to 2004 were evenly distributed across rural and urban areas. The incidence of poverty in the rural areas fell from 83 percent in 1998 to 78 percent in 2004, while poverty in urban areas declined to 53 percent from 56 percent in 1998 (Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2006:2).

This means that Zambia is in urgent need for resources to fight hunger and exclusion from the enjoyment of basic human rights, for example, food, shelter and education.

## **1.2. The Current Structure of the Education System**

The formal education system in Zambia consists of a 7-5-4 structure. This covers 7 years of primary education, 5 years of secondary education (i.e. 2 years of Junior

secondary and 3 years of Senior secondary) and 4 years of higher education at university but five years of university education for such professional fields such as engineering and agriculture, six years for veterinary medicine and seven years for medicine.

However, there have been on-going changes in the structure of the education system. Most primary schools have been upgraded to basic school level (i.e., primary schools have been turned into full basic schools covering Grades 1 to 9). Secondary schools are now referred to as high schools covering Grades 10 to 12 in most cases. This is true in Government (Public) Schools, however, most mission schools and private schools are still providing education from Grades 8 to 12. According to the Ministry of Education (1996), the fundamental units around which Zambia's education system is to be organised are basic schools, offering Grades 1 to 9, and high schools, offering Grades 10 to 12. This development implies that the formal education system will have a 9-3-4 structure, comprising nine years of Basic education, three years of high school education and, as before, four years of university to first degree level and five years of university education for such professional fields such as engineering and agriculture, six years for veterinary medicine and seven years for medicine.

### **1.3. The meaning and scope of Basic Education**

#### **1.3.1. What is Basic Education?**

According to UNESCO (2007) the scope of Basic education includes the following components:

- Early childhood care and initial education. These can be made available through arrangements involving families, communities, or institutional programmes, as appropriate;
- Primary schooling: primary education must be universal, ensuring that the basic learning needs of all children are met, and taking into account the culture, needs, and opportunities of the community. Supplementary alternative programmes can help meet the basic learning needs of children with limited or no access to formal schooling, provided that they share the same standards of learning applied to schools, and are sufficiently supported; and
- Learning needs of all young people and adults: The basic learning needs of young people and adults are diverse and should be satisfied through a variety of delivery systems. These include literacy programmes, skills training, apprenticeships, and formal and non-formal education programmes in health, nutrition, population, agricultural techniques, the environment, science, technology, family life, including fertility awareness, and other societal issues (UNESCO, 2007:9).

In Zambia, the concept of Basic education refers to education covering grades 1-9 (i.e., 7 years of primary education and 2 years of junior secondary education). This thesis focuses on Basic education from grades 1 to 9 in order to assess the progress

that has been made in Zambia as the World Education Conference in 2000 introduced renewed urgency among stakeholders in the education sector to provide Basic education for every child in the world.

### 1.3.2. Aims of Basic Education in Zambia

The Ministry of Education in Zambia has stipulated in its policy document, 'Educating Our Future' that the 'overarching aim of school education, therefore, is to promote the full and well-rounded development of the physical, intellectual, social, affective, moral and spiritual qualities of all pupils so that each can develop into a complete person, for his or her own personal fulfilment and the good of society' (Ministry of Education: 1996:29). The Ministry of Education (1996:30) continues:

...basic education aims at providing each pupil with a solid academic and practical foundation that will serve as the basis for a fulfilling life and that will equip each one with the pre-requisites needed for a working life, various forms of training, or the continuation of school education.

This is in conformity with Education for All vision of the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All, derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which stresses that everyone has the right to education (UNESCO, 2010). The goal of EFA was re-affirmed and operationalised at the World Education Conference held in Dakar, Senegal, in April, 2000 (This is discussed in greater detail in chapter 2).

## **1.4. The Development of Education in Zambia during the Colonial**

### **Period**

The colonial period covers the following three eras: that of British South Africa Company, 1890 to 1924; the British Colonial Office Administration, 1924 to 1953; and the Federation of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1924 to 1963 (Mwanakatwe, 1974). Zambia is a former British colony, as already mentioned. The education that was offered in these three eras is examined in detail later in this section but in the meantime it is important to be aware of the introduction of western education (formal schooling) in Zambia.

Formal schooling in Zambia was introduced by European missionaries. The opening of primary schools expeditiously followed establishment of mission stations. The first school was opened by a Christian missionary, Frederick Stanley Arnot in 1883 at Limulunga, in western province of Zambia, with an enrolment of three pupils, all boys, and one teacher who was untrained (Snelson, 1974:29). The opening of Arnot's school marked the beginning of the formal school system in Zambia. However, it is important to mention that this was the beginning of formal education and not the beginning of education as a whole in Zambia. Education has existed in Zambia since time immemorial. This is informal education (traditional education). In this form of education, the young received their training through personal observation and from the teachings of the elders. As Kelly (1999:12) notes: Learning was inculcated through: (i) imitation, for example, work and play; (ii) oral literature; (iii) social ceremonies; (iv) participation in adult activities, for example, fishing, hunting and house-keeping. "There was provision for some formal skills training (pottery/ carving/

weaving/herbalist knowledge and skills), and for organized learning during seclusion periods prior to initiation” (Kelly, 1999:12). Good manners were instilled in both the young and adults in this informal type of education. The purpose of traditional education was to serve the needs and aspirations of the community as a whole. It emphasised community needs rather than individual needs. However, it was practical and relevant to the local environment.

Arnot’s school was from the beginning overwhelmed by problems such as poor school attendance and suspicions of the local people because formal education was alien to the Africans who initially did not see the value of reading and writing which finally led to its closure until 1887 when it was reopened by another missionary, Francis Coillard (Kelly, 1999; Mwanakatwe, 1974:8). Mwanakatwe (1974) observes that through patient work, devoted service and an indomitable spirit, Coillard was able to overcome the early difficulties and suspicions of the local people who subsequently trusted him. Nature of his formal schooling was in the form of a ‘prayer school’ where students received religious instruction and the three ‘R’s i.e., arithmetic, reading and writing (Snelson, 1974).

In the 1890s, the territory of Zambia, which was known then as North Western and North Eastern Rhodesia, came under the control of the British businessman, Cecil Rhodes and his Company, the British South Africa Company (Snelson, 1974). The British South Africa Company gained control of the territory through the Lochner concession. This was the agreement between the British South Africa Company and Lewanika, the paramount chief of the Lozi people of the Western region (province) of

Zambia in which the Lozi chief sought British protection of his territory. As Mwanakatwe (1974:7) notes: “A direct result of the Treaty was that the Lozi were assured of ‘protection’ and the Company undertook to provide an annual subsidy for the welfare of the Paramount Chief and his people”. In return, the BSA Company obtained rights to exploit mineral resources in the Lozi territory which were construed subsequently to include exclusive rights in the exploitation of minerals in the rich copperbelt area of Zambia (Mwanakatwe, 1974). The BSA Company joined the two territories, North Western and North Eastern Rhodesia in 1911 into Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) (Snelson, 1974). The British South Africa Company administered Northern Rhodesia on behalf of the British Government. When Lewanika realised the extent of his loss of authority as a result of agreeing to the Lochner concession he responded by permitting other missionaries to settle in the territory. Hence, by 1924, there were fifteen missionary societies in Zambia, practically all of which operated schools (Carmody, 2004:3). The majority of schools were established and run by Christian missionaries. The primary purpose of practically all early educational endeavours of the missionaries was to teach students how to read the scriptures for themselves so that they could become more ardent Christian converts. Education, was therefore, used as a tool for spreading the Christian gospel to others by the early missionaries.

Most teachers in mission schools were poorly educated and not trained. As Mwanakatwe (1974) points out that in the early days of educational developments in Zambia, there were very few, in fact hardly any, local teachers who had the capacity of giving effective instruction in the three R’s, that is, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, and Bible knowledge. Thus, while education was effective at mission



stations in the village schools the level of education was generally ineffective and completely unsatisfactory as rudimentary and undeveloped teaching was given to students since teachers were poorly trained and teaching and learning materials were inadequate (Kelly, 1999). These issues are examined in greater detail later in this chapter.

Even though, the BSA Company had scored some successes in ending the slave trade, stopping inter-tribal wars and creating an administrative system, the Company showed little or no interest at all in the provision of education to the Africans. The BSA Company was only interested in exploiting minerals and not in the education of Africans. The Africans were used as cheap labour in the mines. The Company believed that an uneducated workforce is more easily manipulated. As Carmody (2004) points out that with regards to African education, the history of the BSA Company for the subsequent thirty-four years was one of consistent neglect. In spite of collecting large sums in taxes from the local people, the BSA Company gave no money for schools except for one school, Barotse National School. The Barotse National School was established in March 1907 as a result of the agreement between the BSA Company and the Paramount Lozi Chief Lewanika of Western province of Zambia (Snelson, 1974). It was agreed that 10% of the tax which was collected from the Africans living in Barotseland in the Western province of Zambia should be set aside for the provision of educational services for the Lozi people (Snelson, 1974:123). When the school was opened, it had an enrolment of seven pupils (Snelson, 1974:123) . However, steadily the number of pupils enrolled in the school increased, more especially after it was decided not to impose any age limits on pupils while

enrolling even married pupils for whom huts were to be built within the school premises.

By 1924 it was estimated that 600 pupils had enrolled at the Barotse National School (Mwanakatwe, 1974:13). From the onset the standard of educational work at this school was high in comparison with schools attended by African children elsewhere in the territory in that the infrastructure was slightly better developed. As earlier mentioned, in line with the historic agreement entered into between the British South Africa Company and the Paramount Chief Lewanika, Barotse National School was set up and funds for maintaining this school were provided from the Barotse Native Trust Fund. It was attended by African children, mainly children from the royal family of Chief Lewanika.

Apart from the Barotse National School which was administered by the British South Africa Company, education may be said to have been in the hands of missionaries. The British South Africa Company only gave financial support to the Barotse National School and did not give any to the mission schools, as already mentioned. Improvement was difficult to accomplish in mission schools without the financial assistance and support from the administration of the British South Africa Company. Mwanakatwe (1974) observes that teaching and learning resources such as chalk, desks and other educational requirements were either in short supply or unavailable and teachers' pay was poor and conditions of service unsatisfactory in mission schools. Kelly (1991:8) further observes that by the end of the BSA Company rule of Northern Rhodesia, approximately 1500 schools, the majority of them created by

missionaries were scattered throughout the territory, all poorly equipped. The missionaries did not have adequate resources. However, they had no choice but to support schools and teachers from their own limited resources.

In 1924 the BSA Company surrendered control of Northern Rhodesia to the London Colonial Office because of financial difficulties. As Kelly (1999:31) notes: “Despite large tax revenues, the BSAC continued to incur financial losses on its administration of the territory. In 1923 it made arrangements with the London Colonial Office to relinquish control the following year”. This kindled hope among the missionaries that the new, Colonial Government would support their work in education. In 1924 a high-powered team of educators from USA and other parts of Africa such as South Africa visited Northern Rhodesia and made a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of educational needs of the local people (Mwanakatwe, 1974). They discussed with Government officials and met members of the General Missionary Conference before making recommendations for effective development of African education. It is important to mention that this high-powered team of educators was referred to as the Phelps-Stokes Commission. The aim of the Commission was to provide education to the Africans that was adapted to their local conditions/environment. In its report, it urged the Government to subsidise the educational work of missions (Kelly, 1999), as in spite of educational developments made by missionaries, they did not receive any financial support from Government. This meant increased Government expenditure on education in the form of grants-in-aid (funds given to missionaries by government) to the missions. It was predicted that such an investment in education would eventually lead to better health, increased productivity and a more contented people. However, it was foreseen that funds

available for grants-in-aid were likely to be limited, therefore, the Commission recommended that priority should be given to the establishment of teacher training institutions at selected mission stations (Carmody, 2004). The commission urged that next in importance was aid for maintenance of European missionaries to supervise the educational work of their mission stations and out-schools (Carmody, 2004). It was also recommended that the Government should allocate sufficient funds for the training and employment of visiting teachers whose task would be to improve village schools (Carmody, 2004).

Until 1924, Christian missionaries were almost entirely responsible for the country's educational growth. Later development was on the basis of a policy of cooperation between the Government and the mission societies. According to Mwanakatwe (1974) in 1925, the first Sub-Department of the Education of Natives (Africans) was set up as a section in the Native Affairs Department. On 1st April 1925, Geoffrey Chitty Latham was appointed the first Director of Native Education and the Government appointed J.B Clark as the first full-time Inspector of European schools in Northern Rhodesia (Mwanakatwe, 1974:17). The task facing Latham as he set out to work in his office located in Livingstone was immense. Beginning virtually from scratch, he had to develop administrative machinery whereby Government could advise, encourage, and help the Missionary Societies throughout the country in raising the standards of their educational work. He also had to devise an educational system for the vast underdeveloped rural areas, and for the townships which were growing upon the line of rail and in which missionary societies had so far shown little interest (Mwanakatwe, 1974). This is because missionaries focused on developing education

in particular rural areas mainly in the Southern and Western provinces of Zambia where they had decided to settle.

However, despite the interest that was shown by the Colonial British Government to develop the education of Africans, little change was recorded in terms of the total number of pupils in schools in the first 15 years of its rule. Kelly (1999:54) draws our attention to Henkel (1989) who noted that until 1940 the number of pupils never amounted to more than 130,000, a number which had been reached by missionary societies as early as 1924; the number of pupils in Government-aided schools evinced a slow initial increase; and in 1927 it was 25,000, only reaching 30,000 after a period of ten years, even though it then quickly increased to 117,000 by 1945.

The British colonial Government ran a racially segregated education system where there were separate schools for Africans, European children, and children of mixed races (coloureds), including Asians. As Achola (1990:1) affirms, “Racially segregated schools were a cornerstone of British educational policy in Zambia, as was the case elsewhere in British dependencies in Africa”. The British Colonial Government gave priority to the education of European children as it wanted to develop its manpower in order to subjugate the Africans. As a result, the Colonial Government did not invest sufficient funds in the education of Africans. For example in 1930, as Mwanakatwe (1974:20) observes: “The government spent £15,300 from the colonial reserve for ‘Native Education’ out of a total expenditure in the territory of £695,000. The expenditure on ‘Native Education’ represented 2.2 per cent approximately of total expenditure and was equivalent to an expenditure of just over two and a half pennies

per head of the African population”. The following factors can be attributed to this situation: the Northern Rhodesian Government had put in place tight control measures on government expenditure. The worldwide economic depression of the early 1930s caused the country’s young mining industry to collapse which resulted in a decline of financial and mineral resources (Mwanakatwe, 1974). This seems to have instilled perpetual fear in the Northern Rhodesian Government that something similar might occur again (Mwanakatwe, 1974). Even when the economic situation had changed, in that government revenues and reserves increased immensely in the early 1940s due to the high, war-time demand for copper, the government was hesitant to invest in development projects (Kelly, 1991).

The second factor that can be noted is that the British Colonial Government had fears of producing an unemployed educated class. According to the Colonial Government if many Africans were educated then it would be difficult to create jobs for them which would result in having an unemployed educated class in the country. Therefore, the government expressed some misgivings about the provision of higher levels of primary education including secondary education. As Northern Rhodesian Government (1930:17) observes: “With a regular supply of Standard IV candidates available for vocational training the problem will be to make sure, as far as possible, that no more pupils are trained in each line than can be readily absorbed in the country”. In addition, the government feared that giving Africans higher levels of education would be dangerous as it would lead to the emergence of a “discontented unemployed class”. Kelly (1999) notes that even as late as 1946, the request to open a new secondary school was turned down by speaking of the danger of creating “an

intellectual unemployed proletariat”. In fact, the education provided to Africans was insufficient both in quality and quantity. As Achola (1990) notes:

The dominant mode of pedagogy was rote learning, rather than discovery learning, which could have fostered creativity. Moreover, heavy emphasis was placed upon primary school education. This was consistent with British colonial policy of allocating Africans exclusively to subordinate positions within the colonial social structure. It has been said that of all the British dependencies in Africa, Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) was one of the least developed in terms of educational facilities of education in Northern Rhodesia for given years in the colonial period (Achola, 1990:2).

The other factor for neglect of the education of Africans was that the British Colonial Government feared that it might reduce employment prospects for white settlers and immigrants because of competition for jobs. As a result, the British Colonial Government increasingly apportioned large sums of public funds to developing European education. As Kelly (1991:9) observes that recurrent expenditure on providing education for about 1,000 European children in 1937 was far beyond expenditures on over 30,000 African children the same year (without counting an additional 74,000 African children in “unaided” schools).

In 1953, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was established<sup>1</sup>. Kelly (1991) argues that the British government formed the Federation against the wishes of the majority of the African people in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Most Africans wanted to govern themselves separately in their respective countries.

During the Federal period (1953-1963) education continued to be offered in a racially segregated manner. The Northern Rhodesia Government retained responsibility for education of Africans while the Federal Government was responsible for education of all the other races (Europeans, Asians and Coloureds) and for higher education. The Government set up high quality educational facilities in the major towns, however, access was restricted to European children. The education offered to European children in the schools was usually of a much higher standard in terms of teaching staff, curriculum, infrastructure and other teaching/learning resources than in even the best of the African schools. There was unbalanced allocation of resources, just like in the other preceding years, with the larger share going to educational developments for non-Africans and a relatively small share going to North Rhodesia Government for African children (even if copper reserves from Northern Rhodesia financed most of the educational developments for all races). Most African people in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were strongly opposed to the establishment of the Federation

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1. This was the amalgamation of present day Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. Zambia was called Northern Rhodesia and Zimbabwe was called Southern Rhodesia but jointly referred to as Rhodesia. Malawi was referred to as Nyasaland.



of Rhodesia and Nyasaland as they saw it as marginalising them and entrenching settler power (Kelly, 1999).

The Federal capital was Salisbury which was also the capital of Southern Rhodesia. The Federal Government in Salisbury was looking forward to exploiting Northern Rhodesia's copper industry. Kelly (1999:60) notes that during the period of the Federation, almost £100 million was transferred in tax from Northern Rhodesia to Salisbury (now Harare), mostly for development projects including education in Southern Rhodesia. For example, in the period between 1959 and 1960 alone, the tax paid by Northern Rhodesia was £19.5 million, of which only little over £1 million was returned for development purposes (Kelly, 1999:60). Cheap labour for Southern Rhodesia's economic development was obtained from Nyasaland.

During the Colonial period, there was the problem of insufficient school facilities for African children in Northern Rhodesia especially at the higher primary level, secondary and higher education levels (Mwanakatwe, 1974). One wonders why the Colonial Government did not provide sufficient educational facilities for Africans in Northern Rhodesia which had a much higher average income after 1945 when the Second World War ended than many African dependent countries. Mwanakatwe (1974) observes that it is obvious that education planners during the colonial period were usually too complacent, too ready to be satisfied with the minimum expansion of facilities for the education of the Africans, partly because the Colonial Government was hesitant to invest substantial funds in the development of human resources and also because it considered the education offered to the African

to be a favour and not a birthright. Apart from an attempt to improve the efficiency of the school system, education planners did not actively foster its rapid expansion and development until only a few years before independence. They rarely appreciated the need and importance of giving to the African education for its own sake. It was not planned that Africans should take up white-collar jobs in direct competition with Europeans. By 1930, there were only 3 schools, namely, Barotse National School and the Jeanes and Agricultural schools at Mazabuka administered by the Government (Kelly, 1999).

When the Federation ended in December 1963, approximately 342,000 African children were enrolled in primary school and 7,050 in secondary (Kelly, 1991:12). Approximately, four-fifths of the primary school children were in the lower four classes, with boys accounting for 58 percent of the total enrolment (Kelly, 1991:12). The neglect of education for the Africans in Northern Rhodesia was ably documented by the Economic Survey Mission on Economic Development in Zambia in 1963. “The Economic Survey Mission, jointly sponsored by the United Nations , the Economic Commission for Africa, and the Food and Agricultural Organisation, could only find 4,420 Africans who had passed the two-year Junior Secondary Course (Form II), and only some 961 Zambian Africans with full Cambridge School Certificates” (Achola, 1990:2). At independence in 1964, ‘Zambia had only 100 university graduates (all of them educated outside the country), and only 1,500 with full Cambridge School Certificates, and that there were no more than 6,000 indigenous citizens with at most two years of secondary education’ (Achola, 1990 : 2). As Achola (1990) continues:

These figures for 1964 make sad reading when seen against the fact

that the educational targets had been met by Ghana in 1943, by Kenya and Tanzania in 1957 and 1960, respectively; and in 1963, Uganda alone had more than six times as many secondary school Certificate holders as Zambia.

As already mentioned, Zambia attained its independence on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1964. Kelly (1991) notes that Zambia became an independent nation in 1964, rich in material and financial resources but almost destitute in developed human resources. Apart from the problem of shortage of qualified manpower, Zambia was faced with the problem of uneven distribution of educational facilities throughout the country in 1964. Mwanakatwe (1974) draws our attention to the fact that in 1964, there were nearly two thousand lower primary schools scattered over the country, and they provided four years of education. He explains that in rural areas, after the fourth year, there was a form of selection (an examination) which allowed about half of the pupils to proceed to the fifth and sixth years of education. He explains further that on the contrary, in the urban areas, mainly because of political and sociological reasons, the Colonial Government had provided for a number of years facilities to allow every child who started in the first year to reach the sixth year of education. Even then, it must be noted that during the Colonial Period, there was inadequate provision for the education of urban children. The majority of Missionary Societies had set up themselves in the rural areas and established their schools there (Kelly, 1991), as their main task was to teach Africans how to read and write for evangelisation purposes. It is important to note that the problem of uneven distribution of educational facilities

was not only in Zambia but was also the case in other former colonies as there was an uneven distribution of school provision (Watson, 1982). Dual standards were promoted because on the one hand there were urban colonial schools for the indigenous elites, for example, English, French and Dutch, while on the other hand there were rural vernacular schools for the poor (Watson, 1982).

In summary, during the Colonial Period in Zambia, education from higher primary level onwards was not well developed. Education was characterised by segregationist and inequitable patterns of provision for African and European children. In fact, this inadequate educational development for Africans set the tone of educational policy in Zambia after independence. Since at independence, in 1964, Zambia inherited a racially segregated educational system, meagre educational facilities and enrollments for Africans, and a heavily liberal arts biased educational curriculum, the new government, under the United National Independence Party (UNIP) saw as among its most important educational priorities, the elimination of racial segregation in schools: increased enrollments for Zambians at secondary and higher education levels with a view to creating a large pool of indigenous Zambians to run the institutions of their new political and social order; and the introduction of science-oriented curricula and professional subjects to train Zambians for technical and professional careers (Achola, 1990). Indeed, immediately after independence there was an urgent need to expand education at all levels in order to eliminate racial segregation in schools, combat inequities and create an educated workforce. These issues are addressed in greater detail in the next section.

### **1.5. Educational Developments at Basic School level in Zambia after the Attainment of Independence**

Low educational attainment in Zambia's education system has a long history. From the Colonial era education was discriminatory and opportunities were limited. At independence in 1964, the Zambian Government inherited a racially segregated education system for Africans and non-Africans. Kelly (1999) draws our attention to the fact that European schools were lavishly equipped and well-staffed. He points out that the Zambian Government faced the problem of how to integrate the two systems (white and non-white schools) without affecting standards and without replacing racial distinction based on class. He also explains that girls' participation in schools was poor in that girls accounted for 42% of primary enrolments and 20% of secondary enrolments (Kelly, 1999:82). Additionally, there was uneven geographical distribution whereby large areas had few or no schools. There was insufficient urban provision especially in cities and large towns (Kelly, 1999).

Following the attainment of independence the new political leadership, under UNIP made policy decisions that focused on widening access to schooling. This was in line with the UNIP manifesto of 1962. The UNIP manifesto offered a comprehensive statement of the educational objectives that UNIP looked forward to pursue on attainment of independence. Exceptional among such objectives were abolition of racially segregated schools, universal primary education for both girls and boys and increased educational facilities and enrolments (Achola, 1990). The new government of Zambia adopted a policy to ensure equality of educational opportunity regardless of

race. For example, the Education Act of 1966 abolished racially segregated schools in consistency with the UNIP manifesto of 1962 and brought control of private schools firmly under the Ministry of Education. The government integrated the school system in order to eliminate racial segregation in schools. Thus, African children were allowed to enrol in non-African schools. The former non-African schools became known as the fee-paying schools. However, the provision of free education continued after the attainment of independence in 1964 in the former African schools, which became known as the non-fee paying schools.

In addition, the new government had to deal with great inequalities in primary school enrolments and facilities between the urban and rural areas. As earlier alluded to, in the rural areas, the majority of primary schools had, during the colonial period, provided up to only four years of education, as compared to six years in urban areas. As Achola (1990) notes,

There were also fewer primary schools per school-age population in the rural areas at the time. What was needed, with the onset of independence, was a policy which would increase grades standards at the primary school level beyond the four years, and would create more primary schools in rural areas; this would go a long way towards reducing rural-urban migration of youth in search of more educational opportunities in the urban areas (Achola, 1990:4).

The expansion of primary education was not one of the Government's top priorities immediately after independence; instead the Government focused its attention on the development of secondary schools and the university (Kelly, 1991). This is because the Government wanted to meet the need for educated manpower since at independence Zambia was deficient in developed or educated human resources. Even then the Government attempted to meet the needs of primary education. The policy of the Government during the period of the First National Development Plan (1966-1970) included: (i) to provide sufficient places for primary education for every child aged seven in Zambia in 1970; (ii) to provide opportunities for all upper primary school children in rural primary schools to complete a seven-year primary course; and (iii) to improve the quality of primary education by expanding teacher training, and upgrading the standards of existing teachers (GRZ, 1966). The plan was to expand enrolments so that by 1970 every child would be able to attain at least four years of primary education (GRZ, 1966). From 1966, 75% of all children completing the four year primary course in rural areas, and 100% in urban areas, would be given the opportunity to complete the full primary course of seven years (GRZ,1966). These targets were not met by the government mainly due to the underestimation of the population of school-age children because of lack of information on population statistics. In addition, Kelly (1991) points out that the accomplishment of these targets were not without problems as almost all the schools developed during this period were provided on a self-help basis (with the help of the local communities), but many of them were no more than temporary shelters that soon had to be replaced; teachers were allocated the most unsuitable living accommodation, if any; all surplus capacity was used up in urban areas by the extension of double teaching (i.e., one teacher teaching two classes in a day of the same grade for example, one class taught

in the morning session and another in the afternoon session, for instance) to upper primary classes and the selective introduction of triple sessions at the lower primary level; and the teacher training programme was reduced to one residential year so as to accelerate output (but was re-extended to two years in phased stages in 1968 and 1969).

During the period of the Second National Development Plan (1972-1976) the main objectives for the expansion of primary education were to provide sufficient new places at the lower primary level to keep pace with population growth; and at the upper primary in order to achieve an 80 per cent national progression rate from grade 4 to 5 by 1976 (GRZ, 1972).

It is important to note that the Government of the Republic of Zambia has a long standing educational goal of achieving universal nine years of Basic education. This goal was stressed as far back as the time of the struggle for independence when the nationalist movement set the goal that every Zambian should be able to complete at least a Junior Secondary Education. The nationalist leaders believed that education was a human right. UNIP's policies stipulated ten years of compulsory basic education. However, the 1977 Educational Reforms reduced this to nine years though the general principle of providing universal basic education remained unchanged. The Ministry of Education (1977) in the 1977 Education Reform document (the first educational policy document) observed that rather than ten years of universal Basic education, the ultimate goal should be to provide nine years of universal basic education, whereby every child who enters Grade 1 at the age of seven should remain



in school for at least nine years until the end of Grade 9 at the age of sixteen. The structure proposed in 1977 was that in the course of time every primary school would cater for pupils from Grade 1 to Grade 9, with the curriculum organised on the basis of six years of primary and three years of Junior Secondary Education.

It was envisaged that the nine years of universal Basic education would provide general education in basic subjects, including some practical skills and a sound foundation for further full-time or part-time education (Ministry of Education, 1977). It was also seen that nine years of universal basic education would enable pupils to grow two years older before they could join the world of work, if they did not go on with full-time education or training (Ministry of Education, 1977). It was believed that what the child would have learnt by this time should be sufficient and lasting to allow him/her to play a full and useful role in his/her community if he/she left school.

The idea behind the 1977 Educational Reforms was to create a system of education which is properly attuned to, and more fully meets, the needs and aspirations of Zambians and which functions as a powerful instrument for our society's progress in the direction the country chose as an independent nation (Ministry of Education, 1977). In 1977 the Ministry of Education stipulated in its first national educational policy document that "Education is a social institution which will continue to reflect the characteristics of the Zambian society..." (Ministry of Education, 1977:6). Educational objectives stated in the 1977 Educational Reforms include, the Ministry of Education should:

- (i) more aggressively improve the quality of education and services;
- (ii) eliminate regional and other inequalities in educational provision;
- (iii) provide opportunity to every child of school-going age to enter Grade 1;
- (iv) clear the bottle-neck at Grades 4-5 levels so that every Grade 4 pupil, as far, proceeds possible to Grade 5 and continues to Grade 7;
- (v) progressively increase Grades 8-9 places so that, in due course, every child who completes Grade 7 shall be able to enter Grade 8 and complete Grade 9;
- (vi) encourage self-help projects by communities and ensure that educational projects shall be executed to completion (Ministry of Education, 1977:97-98).

The Government of the Republic of Zambia was aware that the achievement of nine years of universal basic education would take a long time. It would require a lot of resources. The Zambia Ministry of Education (1977) noted that in every respect the task of providing nine years of universal basic education was immense. To enrol every child between the ages of seven (entry to Grade 1) and sixteen (end of Grade 9) in school would require additional school places, teachers, and annual recurrent funds. During the first few years after the 1977 Reform Document (first education policy) was published, the only steps taken to implement this policy were ongoing efforts to expand secondary school provision so that an increasing number of Grade 7 students would be able to proceed to Grades 8 and 9 (Ministry of Education, 1992). It is important to note that because of the rapid increase in Grade 7 enrolments, the numbers leaving primary schools on completion of Grade 7 grew very rapidly. Thus, in 1982, the first basic school (with classes from Grades 1-9) was opened (Ministry of

Education, 1992). Later in 1982, there were 7 basic schools, and by 1989, there were 290 (Ministry of Education, 1992). In January 1991 it was approximated that there were 381 such schools, but by June 1991 there were about 600 basic schools with Grade 8 and 9 enrolments of over 50,000 (Ministry of Education, 1992:71).

However, the 1977 Educational Reforms took too little account of the education of girls. As Kelly (1999:171) puts it: “Like most documents of the time, it has nothing special to say about girls’ education or environmental problems”.

The second national educational policy document, ‘Focus on Learning’, concentrated on the development of primary education. As stated in the second national policy: “The basic national policy in the education sector is to provide every eligible child with good quality education in Grades 1-7. From this follows that providing good quality primary education for all school-aged children, within the shortest possible time-span, is the foremost educational priority” (MOE, 1992:15). The Ministry of Education (1992) continues: “This priority is based on equity, social, economic and educational grounds” (MOE, 1992:15). The preparation of ‘Focus on Learning’ policy document was financed by the World Bank.

Ministry of Education in Zambia argued in its 1992 national education policy document that primary education was more beneficial than other levels of education. As the Ministry of Education (1992) states,

There is abundant evidence to show that primary education

promotes farmer productivity and that, in relation to the amount invested, the returns from primary education are very much higher than those from secondary or university education. There is also increasing evidence to show that countries that invested more heavily in improving the quality of primary education have made greater economic advances than those which invested less, while evidence from across the world bears out that providing the poor with primary education is a key approach to the reduction of poverty (Ministry of Education, 1992:15).

The argument is based on the human capital approach view to education held by the World Bank. This view has encouraged inequities in education as it will be seen in the next chapter. It is suffice to mention here that the shift in thinking was influenced by the World Bank and IMF through the conditionalities attached to loans (this will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 2 as I examine the issue of market driven policies).

After independence in 1964 to 1991 the Government of the Republic of Zambia followed a socialist approach in its provision of public services. Social democratic principles guided the provision of education. These principles included free or subsidised provision of basic services such as health and education (Ministry of Education, 1996). However, from 1991 onwards there have been major shifts in the

thinking/approach in education provision. The Government of Zambia shifted to a policy of cost sharing with parents in both primary and secondary schooling. The Ministry of Education in Zambia outlines in its official policy that with immediate effect arrangements for both the financing and provision of education will involve building alliances with communities, private providers of education, voluntary organisations and beneficiaries (Ministry of Education, 1996). Cost sharing encompasses household contributions in the form of formal fees such as school levies and examination fees, indirect charges for school uniforms, books, pens, pencils, etc., and informal payments (Oxfam, 2000). Cost sharing also includes capital spending, with contributions of cash, labour and materials for school construction and maintenance (Ministry of Education, 1996).

The Ministry of Education in Zambia in its third and current education policy, 'Educating Our Future', states,

Zambia is a liberal democratic society. Hence, it is the values of liberal democracy that must guide the formulation of educational policies and implementation (Ministry of Education, 1996:1).

The philosophical rationale for educational provision in Zambia is informed by neo-liberal market policies. These include principles of liberalisation, decentralisation, partnership, and accountability (Ministry of Education, 1996). With regards to school curriculum, the Ministry of Education in Zambia states,

The Ministry will promote entrepreneurship education and place particular emphasis on scientific, mathematical and

practical skills; and will specially promote computer science in schools (Ministry of Education, 1996:61).

Unlike the 1977 education policy that was guided by social democratic principles in its production and whose motivation was to create an educational system which fully meets the needs and aspirations of Zambians and reflecting the attributes of the Zambian society (Ministry of Education, 1977), the current education policy, 'Educating Our Future' requires that education responds to the demands of the market economy; as the Ministry of Education (1996) goes on to state,

The demands of national development require that the Government pays attention to the role education plays in human capital formation, particularly in developing the types of knowledge, skills, values and competencies that are necessary for economic development and social welfare (Ministry of Education, 1992:2).

These neo-liberal policies promote the market economy that result in inequalities in education as it will be seen in the next chapter.

In line with the Education for All commitments made at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 of providing education to everyone and the observed decline of national education standards with regards to the quality of education necessitated the establishment of a comprehensive sub-sector investment programme in 1999 in Zambia. This was called

the Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme (BESSIP) which ran from 1999 to 2002 (Musonda, 2003:22). BESSIP was Zambia's first comprehensive programme with the aim of implementing the 1996 current national policy on Basic education (Musonda, 2003). It was a national programme for the development of Basic education of the Ministry of Education of Zambia, financed through the regular budget of the Ministry and supported by external financing agencies such as multilateral and bilateral aid agencies through grants and loans. It was financed through the following four different modalities: Modality 1 is the pool. This modality involved establishing a pool or a common "basket" into which all Zambian Government and cooperating partner (donor) finance was lodged and disbursed in accordance with an Annual Work Plan for each year. Modality 2 involved World Bank loans; modality 3: are the BESSIP limited components i.e. while the Ministry of Education controls the funds, they are only available for restricted and specified components and they were not in a common bank account or pool; and modality 4 were separate projects managed by individual donors i.e. under this modality funds were made available by donors only for specified BESSIP components/activities (Herbert *et al*, 2002; and Musonda, 2003).

BESSIP's main objectives were twofold: i) increase enrolment at grades 1-7 and reverse the decline in enrolment by providing access to education for all eligible children; ii) improve learning achievements, especially in literacy and mathematics (de Kemp, *et al*, 2008:36). Basically, BESSIP had developmental objectives of improving access, quality, equity and relevance of basic education. BESSIP sought to improve access to Basic education through:

- a) constructing new schools in order to reduce walking distances to a maximum of five kilometres;
- b) reducing school costs for parents by providing grants to schools;
- c) enrolling children who had dropped out or had never gone to school;
- d) offering more bursaries to vulnerable children (girls, orphans, the poor and children in rural areas) (de Kemp, *et al*, 2008:37).

The Ministry of Education (2007) reports that during BESSIP, the main outputs included:

- the construction and renovation of new classrooms;
- a marked increase in the number of teachers attending in-service training; and
- An increase in the procurement of textbooks and other materials.

When BESSIP started it only catered for grades 1 to 7 (GRZ, 2000). As pointed out already, Basic education in Zambia is planned to cater for pupils from grades 1 to 9. As a result, the average Zambian pupil was denied a comprehensive education that can form a firm foundation for the future. It was only in the early 2000s that BESSIP activities were extended to grades 8 and 9. Public primary schools were turned into full basic schools.

Indeed, a study of education policies in Zambia since 1992 might indicate that the policies towards inclusion in the Zambian education paradigm are still far from being emancipatory. While the 1992 and 1996 education policies were expected to increase participation and retention of all children of school-going age, they have done little to reduce problems of access, inequity, retention and quality in Basic education. The



inequalities that existed before 1992 between urban and rural areas are still firmly entrenched; and the inequalities between the 'have' and 'have-nots' still prevail. Despite the focus on access and equity in the policy documents, the poor still constitute the largest group of uneducated persons with poor retention rates at school, high failure rates and unequal access to schooling as it will be seen in greater detail in the next chapter.

Even though, the Ministry of Education in Zambia in its official education policy document, 'Educating Our Future' states,

Every individual in Zambia has a right to education. Hence it is a matter of fairness or justice that access to, and participation and benefit in, the education system be available to all. The development of education will therefore seek to promote equality of access, participation and benefit for all in accordance with individual needs and abilities. Measures to promote equality will include allocating resources to those in greatest need, providing appropriate support systems, and changing the tangible and intangible qualities of the system itself to cater for the diverse educational needs and interests of the population (Ministry of Education, 1996:3).

Today, as it will be seen in greater detail below the problems of ensuring children from every background get access to and quality education continue and this makes the policy of meeting the educational needs of all an illusion.

Numerous challenges still remain in the Basic Education Sub-sector. The major ones include: the challenges of increasing access to vulnerable children including girls and improving the quality of education. The Ministry of Education in Zambia observed in 2003 that:

...the Basic Education Sub-sector is still faced with many challenges in the years ahead. The number of schools offering basic education was 6,459 of which 4,271 are government, 65 Grant Aided, 198 private and 1, 149 community schools. 85.6% of the government schools are in rural areas. In 2001, roughly 1.77 million children were enrolled in grades 1-7. It was estimated that 30% of children in the school-going age were not enrolled, which translated into nearly 620,000 children. The problem was particularly high in rural areas and for children aged 7 with over 55% in that age group not enrolled. There was relative gender parity in grades 1-7, although the figures show that it decreases in the last years of middle basic education (Ministry of Education: 2003:22).

Also, Riddell reports in 2003:

Net enrolment rates fell through the late 1990s, from 70.4% in 1996 to 65.1% in 2001. Even with the inclusion of children in community schools, geared toward the most vulnerable, such as AIDS orphans, the net enrolment rate was 68.5% in 2001. For children in the intake year, aged 7, in 2001 it is estimated that 55.6% were not enrolled in schools. During the same period, gross enrolment rates also fell, from 85.0% in 1996 to 76.9% in 2001 (Riddell 2003:9).

The Zambian Ministry of Education (2003:22) adds: “The situation is even more critical for grades 8-9. The enrolment rates for grades 8-9 are approximately 190,000 of which girls represent 46 % of the total”. In 2003, only half of the pupils who left grade 7 were able to find school places in grade 8, while just over one-fourth who left grade 9 proceeded to Grade 10 (Ministry of Education, 2003:22-23). The Ministry of Education (2007:41) reports that in 2000, it was estimated that there were 560,000 out-of-school children between the ages of 7 and 13. By 2005, the number had decreased to about 67,000 (Ministry of Education, 2007:41). Though the situation had vastly improved, there were still too many children who were not in school. This was because of insufficient school infrastructure and poor conditions of classrooms resulting in lack of school places for orphans and vulnerable children (MOE, 2007). Also, problems concerning the quality of education have continued because of the following factors:

- inadequate teaching and learning materials;
- lack of teachers especially in rural areas;
- HIV and AIDS pandemic. “The loss of teachers through death and sickness has greatly reduced the pupil: teacher contact hours in the schools (MOE, 2003:23).

Yet Zambia has NGOs which work in the education sector. Zambia, like many other developing countries has seen the growth of NGOs (This is explained in detail in Chapter 3). Some of these NGOs work in the education sector as they are key stakeholders in education provision. The Zambian Government under Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) that was put in place in 1991 welcomed the need for partnership in education. Also, the new Government of Zambia led by the Patriotic Front Party that was put in place in September 2011, has continued with the same policy of partnerships in education. As already noted, the Ministry of Education in Zambia has acknowledged the need for partnerships in educational provision. According to the Ministry of Education (1996),

An overall objective of national policy in education is to  
  
establish new and revitalized partnerships, involving all providers  
  
of education and all levels: partnerships between the Ministry of  
  
Education and other government ministries; partnerships between  
  
the Government and non-governmental organizations...

(Ministry of Education, 1996:134).

Indeed, in spite of the presence of NGOs in the education sector in Zambia for some decades, the problems of access, retention, equity and quality have continued in education. The next section will focus on educational problems in developing countries including Zambia.

## **1.6. Educational Problems in Developing Countries**

Even though most of the developing countries including Zambia experienced massive growth in school enrollments soon after independence, in the 1960s in the case of Zambia, such exponential growth was accompanied by manifold challenges and problems. These included some poor school buildings; serious shortage of teachers' accommodation which led to frustration and demoralisation; much repetition, especially in grade 7; and high drop-out rates in rural areas, especially among girls in grades 4, 5 and 6 (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991; Hillman and Jenkner, 2004; Chimombo, 2005). This is because immediately after independence, in many developing countries, school systems did expand rapidly, but in most of them, population growth continued at much higher rates than had been forecast. According to Lungwangwa (1999) the crisis in the education system in Zambia emerged almost simultaneously with the decline in the Zambian Government's support to education has taken place, in the midst of rising population and urbanisation. The Central Statistical Office of Zambia reports that 1980, 1990, and 2000 national censuses recorded total populations of 5.7 million, 7.8 million and 9.9 million respectively (Central Statistical Office, 2000:1). The population of children in schools especially in urban areas increased. Kelly (1999) explains that extra numbers of children were accommodated in very large classes, with double/triple sessions, and 'tied timetables', all of which worked against quality teaching-learning activities.

Even though, remarkable progress has been made in a number of developing countries to get children into school, there are still a lot more children who are not in school.

UNESCO (2011:10) outlines that from 1999 to 2008, the number of primary school-age children out of school decreased by 39 million globally. Over 80% of the decline occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia. Encouraging as this picture might be there is a long way to go. In spite of this achievement, the two regions still account for 69% of all children out of school (UNESCO, 2011:41). Globally, some 67 million children of primary school age are still not in school (UNESCO, 2011:10). In many developing countries, children in rural areas are less likely to attend school and more likely to drop out. UNESCO (2009) observes that children in urban areas are twice as likely as those in rural areas to be in school in Senegal. People living in squatter settlements also face a distinctive set of challenges such as high levels of poverty, ill health and limited provision restricting access. These challenges adversely affect school attendance and the learning capacity of children.

There is low demand for education in the majority of developing countries. The low demand for education is partly due to poverty in most developing countries as poverty means fewer resources for spending on education. The direct and indirect costs of attending school are usually too high for poor families to afford. As Hunt notes (2008:7):

Household income is found to be an important factor in determining access to education as schooling potentially incurs a range of costs, both upfront and hidden. Upfront costs include school fees, while the more hidden costs include uniforms travel, equipment and the opportunity costs of sending a

child to school.

Even when education is public and tuition free, parents still incur other direct costs of sending their children to school (such as transport, uniforms, pens, pencils, exercise books including textbooks), miscellaneous school charges, and boarding fees.

For a number of reasons, some of these out-of-pocket expenses may be greater for girls than boys. For example, parents' greater reluctance to send daughters to school without proper clothing raises the cost of their attendance. Also, in some cultures parents' concern for the physical and moral safety of their daughters makes them unwilling to allow them to travel long distances to school each day, necessitating costly boarding and lodging arrangements (King and Hill, 1993).

Parents may not be able to afford opportunity costs (indirect costs) of educating their children. Many studies have shown that the necessity for children to perform economically important tasks that support household survival adversely affect their participation in school, especially in rural and urban squatter areas. Lloyd and Blanc (1996) argue that even in situations when schools are accessible and affordable, families have to face a net advantage to themselves and their children from forgoing children's full-time participation in domestic and economic activities. Lloyd and Blanc (1996) further argue that in countries where the state has limited powers to enforce compulsory schooling laws, parents serve as their children's gatekeepers



through their control over children's access to the educational resources made available by the state.

Wamachiu and Nyau (1995) noted that the survival or non-survival of girls in the education systems is influenced by a complex interplay between macro-level policy and micro-level practices, beliefs and attitudes. Collectively they determine whether households feel it profitable to educate their daughters, whether educating girls is a wise or poor investment for the future. Anderson (1988) observed that since education is often thought to be most useful in the formal sector and because girls/women often have less access to this sector than boys/men, parents decide that schooling is not significant for the economic roles of their female children.

Additionally, low expectations about future employment, Lockheed, *et al* (1980) asserted that in many cultures, parents decide that education is not worthwhile for their daughters who will move into their husband's families when they marry and that gains in productivity or income due to education will accrue to the families of their sons-in-law rather than to them. In more traditional societies, the girl is looked at as a potential source of income because of the bride-wealth that her marriage will bring to the family once she is married off. Therefore, in such societies, parents are not keen to enrol girls in school. In cases where they are enrolled, they are forced to drop-out from school so that they are married off. Davidson and Kanyuka (1990) observed that in Malawi, gender division of labour combined with the patrilineal property rights, the norms of patrilocal residence and village exogamy tend to reduce the perceived benefits of girls' education. It appears that culture defines the economic worth of

educating girls in relation to boys. It is important to point out that illiterate parents are more unlikely than the literate ones to send their daughters to school. In 1995, the World Bank (1995:44) noted that: “Literate parents are more likely than illiterate ones to enrol their daughters in school, and the regions with the highest proportions of illiterate adults are therefore those with the widest gender gaps”.

What goes on in the classroom also affects girls’ access and retention in schools. Anderson (1988) observed that curriculum content, teaching methods, classroom and facilities are all found to affect girls’ entry and retention in schools. Kelly, *et al* (1998) in their study conducted in Zambia on ‘Girls Education in a System Designed for Boys’, draw our attention to the fact that many questions were raised about the school curriculum, specifically about its relevance, effectiveness and gender bias: girls experience grinding demoralisation at failure either to succeed or to relate what goes on in school with life at home and community; many of the books and illustrations still in use in schools portray women and girls in subordinate, unchallenging, ‘helpless’ roles, they slight girls and women while exalting men and boys; the standard of teaching methodology focuses on passive acquisition of knowledge from the teacher instead of active learning and finding out for oneself. The findings from Kelly, *et al* (1998) reveal that the girl finds little scope for the organisational, caring dispositions she uses so extensively in the home, but remains a spectator and virtual outsider to what is going on in class; and teaching is directed principally towards memorisation of knowledge that will help in passing examinations, but less towards the personal incorporation of understanding, values and attitudes.

In addition, Kelly, *et al* (1998) revealed that the school culture affected girls' participation and performance in school. They found in most schools in Zambia, school culture does not manifest gender-neutrality. This is shown in the way: the distribution of school chores tend to replicate the gender-based distribution of household chores; leadership positions and challenging tasks are assigned mostly to boys; stereotyped reactions are made to pupils' class contributions (for example, a boy's mistake is taken as his own, a girl's is said to be typical of all girls); and teachers, boys, and many girls themselves, have low expectations that girls can produce good academic work, especially in mathematics and science. Additionally, Malewezi (1990) in her study on why some girls fail to continue with their education in Malawi, reported that teachers treated girls differently from boys in terms of academic expectations and gender-specific forms of discipline.

The sex of the teacher is also an important factor that affects girls' access to education. Anderson (1988) stated that the sex of a teacher affects teacher-pupil interaction, with female teachers acting as role models to girls and thus providing more encouragement to girls than male teachers. Indeed, female teachers are required, not only to provide counsel to girls but also to serve as inspirational models who would raise inspirations of girls and reassure parents that the education of their children is in safe hands. However, in Zambia there are too few female teachers, especially in positions of responsibility and in rural schools.

With respect to gender, the education system in Zambia is characterised by inequalities between men and women at all levels with regard to enrolment figures,

progression rates, ratios among teachers/lecturers, and learning achievement. GRZ (2002:78; 2003:6) reports that at the basic school level in 1998 there were 810,873 boys enrolled, compared to 747,151 girls, with a concentration of girls between grades 1 to 4. This gap widens from grade 5 upwards, and gets even worse at high school and tertiary levels. The primary Net Enrolment Ratio<sup>2</sup> declined by 4 percentage points between 1990 and 2003 (GRZ, 2003:6). The gender gap in enrolment remained unchanged at 2 percentage points between the period 2000 and 2003 (GRZ, 2003:6). Also, during the same period, the gender gap in completion rates remained high at 14 percentage points (GRZ, 2003:6).

Another educational problem in developing countries is the issue of dropout rates which are still high. The Ministry of Education (2007:49) define dropout rate as “the proportion of pupils enrolled in a given grade who dropout of school during the school year”. Some children drop out of school before completing a full basic education cycle. UNESCO (2009) reports that in most of the countries in South and west Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, almost one child in three enrolling in school drops out before completion. In 2006, 13% of pupils in South and west Asia and 9% in Sub-Saharan Africa dropped out before completing grade 1 UNESCO (2010).

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2. Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) measures the proportion of children of the official age-group (e.g. 6-11 years) for a given level of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.

For example, in Malawi, just over 60% of children begin primary schooling at the official age. About half of these drop out or repeat the first grade and only 7% progress smoothly to grade 5 (UNESCO, 2009, 2010). In 2011 UNESCO reports: “In sub-Saharan Africa, around 10 million children drop out of primary school each year” (UNESCO , 2011:12). Some countries, including Malawi, have high concentrations of pupils dropping out in grade 1, while others, including Uganda, the problem happens in both grade 1 and 6 (UNESCO, 2011:12). In Zambia, the dropout rates are high from grade 5 onwards. These factors are adversely affecting the achievement of universal primary education.

Tables 1 and 2 below show dropout rate at the basic education level for grades 1 to 7 by gender and province in Zambia and dropout for grades 1 to 9 by gender and province in Zambia respectively.

**Table 1: Dropout for Grades 1-7 by Gender and Province in Zambia**

Province	Male	Female	Total	Percentage Change*
Central	1.94%	2.49%	2.21%	-5.6%
Copperbelt	1.32%	1.75%	1.54%	-10.8%
Eastern	2.41%	3.20%	2.80%	7.4%
Luapula	2.59%	3.54%	3.05%	-7.1%
Lusaka	0.99%	1.50%	1.24%	-25.5%
North western	2.17%	3.28%	2.72%	-6.1%

Northern	2.43%	3.32%	2.85%	-4.0%
Southern	1.55%	2.32%	1.92%	-20.7%
Western	2.76%	3.39%	3.07%	13.8%
National	<b>1.93%</b>	<b>2.62%</b>	<b>2.27%</b>	<b>-6.7%</b>

\* Percentage Change indicates the difference between the current and the previous year's data

expressed as a percentage.

**Source:** Ministry of Education (2007:50)

**Table 2:** Dropout for Grades 1-9 by Gender and Province in Zambia

Province	Male	Female	Total	Percentage Change
Central	2.00%	2.81%	2.40%	-3.2%
Copperbelt	1.31%	1.83%	1.57%	-8.6%
Eastern	2.47%	3.45%	2.95%	5.2%
Luapula	2.63%	3.78%	3.18%	-7.8%
Lusaka	0.98%	1.61%	1.30%	-23.6%
North western	2.27%	3.80%	3.02%	-7.6%
Northern	2.69%	3.72%	3.18%	0.1%
Southern	1.66%	2.76%	2.19%	-18.4%

Western	2.77%	3.83%	3.28%	13.9%
National	<b>1.99%</b>	<b>2.89%</b>	<b>2.43%</b>	<b>-5.6%</b>

**Source:** Ministry of Education (2007:51)

Many learners drop out from school due to economic factors. Though the Ministry of Education in Zambia notes that “It is not yet clear why children are dropping out of basic education for economic reasons in the era of Free Basic Education... (Ministry of Education, 2006:2). One might argue that this is because the Free Basic Education Policy that was introduced in 2002 in Zambia caters only for grades 1 to 7. Yet Basic Education in Zambia is planned to cater for pupils from grades 1 to 9. This implies that Free Basic Education Policy does not cater for those pupils who are in grades 8 and 9.

Another problem in the provision of basic education in developing countries has been the issue of repeaters. For example, in Zambia (for grades 1 to 7) 162,734 pupils repeated in 2005 comprising 87,442 boys and 75, 292 girls (Ministry of Education, 2006:2). For grades 8 and 9, 19421 learners repeated in 2005 of which 10,535 were boys and 8,886 girls (Ministry of Education, 2006:2). Repeaters cause overcrowding in schools which increase costs. In monetary terms, the Ministry of Education in Zambia spent 47 billion kwacha financing the education of repeaters at a unit expenditure of approximately K290, 763 (£36.35) (Ministry of Education, 2006:2). “Since this expenditure does not result in the improvements of educational inputs or expansion of access for the systems, it is perceived to add to system inefficiency”

(Ministry of Education, 2006:2). Repetition can be viewed as a reflection of the quality of education. The presence of large numbers of repeaters can hinder other children from accessing school.

The fundamental aim of education is to equip children with the knowledge, skills and opportunities they need to realise their potential and to participate effectively in social, economic and political life. However, it is sad to note that many education systems in developing countries are failing to realise this aim. As UNESCO (2009:12) reports:

In many developing countries, absolute levels of average learning are exceptionally low. International learning assessments draw attention to the very large disparities between rich and poor countries. Within countries, too, there are often large differences in test scores based on socio-economic status, school performance and other variables.

Not only is it important to get children into school but it is also important to ensure that they stay in school, receive quality education and complete a full cycle of basic education. However, evidence from many developing countries reveals that, once in school, many children are acquiring only the most rudimentary skills as indicated by the following examples: a recent assessment in the Punjab province of Pakistan established over two-thirds of grade 3 students could not write a sentence in the local language, urdu and a similar proportion could not solve a simple subtraction problem; in India, a large scale assessment revealed that 45 percent of children in standard 3



could not read a text designed for standard 1 students; one recent assessment in Peru found that as few as 30 percent of children in grade 1, and 50 percent as in grade 2, could read a simple passage from grade 1 textbook; results from the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) II assessment in Africa showed that the share of grade 6 children reaching the 'desirable' level of literacy was less than 25 percent in Botswana, Kenya and South Africa, and less than 10 percent in Malawi, Uganda, Mozambique and Zambia; and in Nigeria an assessment of fifth-grade students in 2003 found that only 25 percent knew the answer to more than a quarter of the test scores in core subjects (UNESCO, 2009:12). These examples draw attention to the fact that there are serious learning deficits in Sub-Saharan African countries. In Zambia literacy levels are low. As the Government of the Republic of Zambia (2002:78) observes:

The literacy level for the population aged 15 years and above rose from 54.8 percent in 1990 to 67.9 percent in 1996. Female literacy increased from 46.7 percent in 1990 to 59.9 percent in 1996. Literacy in rural areas increased from 37.9 percent in 1990 to 50 percent in 1996 for the age group 15 years and above, while urban literacy increased from 68.5 percent in 1990 to 83.1 percent in 1996. Although, there have been some improvements, the rural/urban and female/male gaps in literacy are still wide and the literacy levels are still low.

GRZ (2003:8) reports that the ratio of literate females to males between the ages of 15 and 24 declined between 1990 and 2002 whereas the Zambian education is characterised by gender disparities at all levels. However, there was relatively narrower gender parity in grades 1 to 7 (98 percent) between 1990 and 2003 but there was a decrease in the last years of middle and basic schooling and became slightly wider at secondary level (90 percent in 2003) and was widest at tertiary level (46 percent).

The other educational problem in developing countries is the impact of HIV and AIDS on education. HIV and AIDS have negatively impacted on education in developing countries especially in Sub-Saharan African countries. According to UNAIDS (2011:10) in 2010 there were approximately 22.9 million people living with HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa. This figure has gone up since 2009, when an estimated 22.5 million people were living with HIV (UNAIDS, 2011:10). UNAIDS (2011:7) further notes:

In 2010, about 68% of all people living with HIV resided in sub-Saharan Africa, a region with only 12% of the global population. Sub-Saharan Africa also accounted for 70% of new HIV infections in 2010, although there was a notable decline in the regional rate of new infections.

HIV and AIDS have had negative effects on the lives of people and children have not being spared. It has resulted into a generation of children without parents. “AIDS has

claimed at least one million lives annually in sub-Saharan Africa since 1998” (UNAIDS, 2011:7). Various studies report that parental loss affects children psychologically and economically. Several research-based studies have found evidence that parental loss is associated with the increased risk of children dropping out of school or delaying school entry (Robson and Kanyanta, 2007; Kasirye and Hisali, 2009). Children from households with individuals who are in the late stages of HIV and AIDS are not able to go to school. This is because AIDS in the family reduces or makes new demands on financial resources. As a result, parents/guardians find it difficult to meet the costs associated with children’s schooling. Also, in cases when the child is infected with HIV and AIDS, and it is full blown, this child often does not want to go to school. Besides, the parents/guardians themselves are in most cases reluctant to invest in the education of an infected child. This is because they think it is a waste of resources as the child might die soon. It is vital to note that some children infected with HIV and AIDS have died before the age entry into pre-school.

The HIV and AIDS pandemic has negatively impacted upon human resource development in many developing countries. For example, in Zambia, as GRZ (2002:79) notes that:

Education is particularly adversely affected because teachers are said to be among the four most infected groups in Zambia. Teachers dying from the pandemic each year are estimated at about one thousand. In addition, due to HIV/AIDS about 600,000 children have become orphans, and this contributes to the high drop-out rate in schools.

On the whole, many developing countries, including Zambia have always struggled with problems of access, retention, equity and quality of learning for all students.

Due to the above educational problems and challenges, and the declining economy in Zambia, the Government of the Republic of Zambia had to call upon other stakeholders such as NGOs to have a stake in the provision of education. In the 1990s when a liberalisation policy was introduced in Zambia, and partnership was included as an important aspect of the policy of education. This was necessitated by the onset of the Education for All agenda in 1990 at Jomtien and also at the Dakar World Education Conference in 2000. Since 1990 the international development community has seen new forms of international partnerships forming around the pledge for EFA.

EFA goals have generated commitments to improve to a great extent access to education. The next chapter discusses the Dakar and Jomtien World Education Conferences in greater detail. Human rights and human capital approaches to education including markets and education policy are also discussed.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Global Concerns on Basic Education, Market Driven Policies and Education**

#### **2.0. Introduction**

In this chapter Education for All World Education Conferences in Jomtien and Dakar, and markets and education policy are discussed. In chapter one it was argued that the colonial education system and post independence education system in Zambia were characterised by inequalities and access to Education for All was far from being achieved. It was seen that for decades, issues related to Basic education had been the concern of many nations globally. In light of this concern World Education Conferences, Jomtien and Dakar, were held in 1990 and 2000 respectively. These Conferences (particularly the Dakar World Education Conference) were intended to encourage national governments and stakeholders to provide education to all children of primary school age and of acceptable quality (UNESCO, 2000).

Over the past few decades there has been an unprecedented interest in education by international organisations such as the World Bank and the United Nations. The World Bank and the United Nations generated doctrines on education. Since the 1970s the World Bank has committed itself to a doctrine stressing the primacy of market forces, where education is seen as a form of ‘human capital’ capable of generating high returns of economic growth (Shultz, 1993; Watkins, 2000). However, by the end of the decade, growing unease over the inequalities associated with radical free-market prescriptions had shifted the balance whereby the UN looked at education

with a human interest value. The UN holds that education is a human right and is capable of unlocking and protecting other human rights. In this chapter, human rights and human capital approaches to education are discussed. This is followed by a discussion on markets and education policy. As it can be seen in this chapter, global markets have influenced education policy in many countries across the globe including Zambia and this leads into a discussion of market-driven policies in Zambia.

## **2.1. EDUCATION FOR ALL: JOMTIEN AND DAKAR**

For decades issues related to Basic education have been the concern of many nations globally. Stakeholders have partnered to co-support the development of basic education in many developing countries. Since the 1960s, gains in enrolment in basic education in many developing countries have been impressive. Progress in enrolment rates has continued to be registered in many developing countries especially after the World Education Conferences, Jomtien and Dakar, held in 1990 and 2000 respectively. However, while progress in enrolment has been made (see Lewin, 2009; UNESCO, 2009), many writers point out that there are far too many children who do not have access to education, and far too few who complete the minimum of schooling needed to become ‘permanently’ literate and numerate as will be shown below.

### **2.1.1. Education for All: Jomtien**

In 1990, about 1,500 delegates from 155 countries and representatives of some 150 governmental, non-governmental and intergovernmental organisations gathered at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand under the auspices of three UN agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP) and the World Bank (Bunell and Furlong 1998:45, UNESCO, 1990: online; Watkins, 2000). The delegates reaffirmed the notion of education as a fundamental human right and called upon all countries to intensify efforts to address the basic learning needs of all (UNESCO, 1990). The Government of Zambia attended the Jomtien Conference, and like many other countries made commitments to universalise adequate Basic education (UNESCO,

1990; Brock-Utne, 2000). King (1991:176) observes: “The World Conference was the highest profile educational event the world has seen - or is indeed likely to see again for many years to come. It had a rather simple aim: to persuade the nations of the world that new and unconventional commitments were needed if the task of offering basic education to all was to be fulfilled.” What makes the 1990 Jomtien Conference different from other earlier conferences such as the Addis Ababa Conference (held in Ethiopia in the early 1960s) and the conference which was launched in the same year, the International Literacy Year (held in Thailand in January 1990) is that it was not only concerned with literacy but also with various elements of Basic education and because it was aimed at the highest policy-making levels in education.

The purpose of the Conference was to encourage developing countries and donors to turn around the downward trend of falling enrolments, falling completion rates, and the poor quality of education in primary schools in developing countries. It was agreed that Basic education should be provided to all children, youth and adults (UNESCO, 1990; World Conference on Education for All, 1990). The need for the achievement of universal primary education was initiated at this Conference. The aim was to make primary education accessible to all children by the year 2000 (UNESCO, 1990: online). Thus, the major thrust of the Jomtien World Education Forum was the attainment of Universal Primary Education<sup>3</sup>.

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3. Universal Primary Education implies the full enrolment (i.e. 100 percent net enrolment) of all children in the primary school age.



The goals included: universal access to learning; a focus on equity; emphasis on learning outcomes; broadening the means and the scope of basic education; enhancing the environment for learning; and strengthening partnerships by 2000 (UNESCO, 1990:online). The Report of the first experts' meeting, defining areas of action held in Paris in March 2007 alludes to the fact that the Jomtien Declaration defined 'providing basic education' as, meeting basic learning needs of every person. Focusing on learning and improving the environment for learning (UNESCO, 2007). The declaration categorically stated: 'Whether or not expanded educational opportunities will translate into meaningful development - for an individual or for society - depends ultimately on whether people actually learn as a result of those opportunities, that is, whether they incorporate useful knowledge, reasoning ability, skills and values...Learning does not take place in isolation. Societies, therefore, must ensure that all learners receive the nutrition, health care, and general physical and emotional support they need in order to participate actively in and benefit from their education' (World Conference on Education For All,1990:35).

Article 26 of the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that every person has a right to education and called for compulsory elementary education. Therefore, the state has an obligation to protect every individual's right to education. The Report of the first experts' meeting outlined that: "By making explicit reference to 'basic education' and 'basic learning needs', the Jomtien Declaration placed EFA within the framework of human rights, thus ensuring that learning should be viewed not merely for its instrumental value contributing to development goals, but also as a value in itself to be provided by the state as an obligation to every citizen"

(UNESCO, 2007:7). If education is regarded as a human right, then Education for All means education for every individual as every individual must have that right.

However, ten years after Jomtien, it was clear that progress towards achieving the set target of universal Basic education by the year 2000 was slow. UNICEF (2001) notes: ‘the net primary enrolment ratio in developing countries increased by only 5 percentage points, from 78 in 1990 to 83 in 2000. This means that just a fifth of the education promise was kept in the 1990s’ (UNICEF, 2001:1). The number of out-of-school children was still high. UNESCO (2000) notes that there were 115.4 million children out of school worldwide in 1999 and 113.6 million in 2001 (UNESCO, 2002:52). An estimated 56% of them, in both years (i.e., 1999 and 2001), were girls; 94% of these children were living in developing countries (UNESCO, 2002: 52). According to UNICEF (2001:1), in 2000 ‘one in every three children in developing countries did not complete 5 years of primary education, the minimum required for achieving basic literacy’.

The Jomtien EFA targets were not met by the year 2000. Although governments set bold targets at the Conference, outcomes fell far short of ambition. The Dakar Framework for Action stated:

The EFA 2000 Assessment demonstrates that there has been significant progress in many countries. But it is unacceptable in the year 2000 that more than 113 million children have no access to primary education, 880

million adults are illiterate, gender discrimination continues to permeate education systems, and the quality of learning and the acquisition of human values and skills fall far short of the aspirations and needs of individuals and societies. Youth and adults are denied access to the skills and knowledge necessary for gainful employment and full participation in their societies. Without accelerated progress towards education for all, national and internationally agreed targets for poverty reduction will be missed, and inequalities between countries and within societies will widen (Dakar Framework for Action, World Education Forum, April, 2000:8).

Indeed, the statistics above indicate that many primary school systems particularly in developing countries continued to face problems of access and equity as they could not cater for all the children who needed primary schooling. Gender inequalities continued. Osttveit (2000) in his article 'Education for All: ten years after Jomtien' notes that nearly two-thirds of children who were denied their right to an education were female (Osttveit, 2000:99). It has been suggested that the major reason was because many parents could not afford to pay school fees for their children due to high poverty levels in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Offorma, 2009; Lewin, 2009).

However, in spite of these educational problems and challenges faced by many countries, particularly developing countries during the Jomtien decade, it must be

underscored that even though Basic education had been a subject of discussion for some time, it never elicited as much interest among development agencies and donors as it did in the Jomtien decade. It is not easy to establish the exact impact that the Jomtien conference has had on levels of donor assistance to Basic education. However, it is certain that Basic education had received more attention than other levels of education from donors in the Jomtien decade than in the previous decades. This is because most donor agencies, and especially the World Bank are of the view that primary education of good quality is the key to alleviating poverty. The World Bank in its 1990 Primary Education Policy Paper suggests that primary education is capable of improving the economy of a nation, by for example, leading to higher agricultural productivity and this has 'positive effects' on fertility (World Bank, 1990). Donors such as the World Bank and UNICEF believe that primary education gives a young woman a sense of personal empowerment and self-confidence; she is likely to marry later, space her pregnancies better, seek medical care for her child and herself when needed, and provide better child care and nutrition (UNICEF, 2000). They also hold that an educated girl is the best guarantor that her children will attend school which would help in putting an end to the inter-generational transmission of poverty (UNICEF, 2000). Additionally, investing in primary education is not costly as compared to other levels of education such as secondary and tertiary. This is because the extra costs of achieving universal primary education is affordable, even in many low-income countries (UNICEF, 2000).

The Jomtien Conference renewed the commitment of governments, donors and NGOs to the provision of education; and it restrengthened the sense of partnership between international and national educational communities, particularly those sections of the

international community capable of providing or lending resources for educational development.

It may be seen that the stress in the Jomtien Conference on reaffirmation, renewal and restrengthening is important, for it highlights the fact that basic ideas underpinning the Jomtien philosophy were not new and had been affirmed at previous events. Many of the ideas, especially those stressing the quality of primary education, the need to increase access to primary education for the marginalised groups and the mobilisation of multiple sources of funding and human support for primary schooling had been internalised in programmes for educational development in most developing countries, long before the Jomtien Conference. For example, Zambia has a long standing goal of achieving 9 years of Basic education for all children from the 1960s ( Ministry of Education, 1977).

The 2000 EFA Forum observed that at the global level the EFA (Jomtien) decade showed slow progress attained in all EFA goals, far behind the 2000 targets planned (EFA 2000 a, b). In short, the Jomtien EFA goals were not achieved by the year 2000. Indeed, this shows that although education may be high on the rhetorical agendas of governments and international organisations, all too many commitments remain unfulfilled.

### **2.1.2. Education for All: Dakar**

The Jomtien Conference was followed ten years later by the Dakar Conference. The Dakar World Education Conference was convened in April 2000 in Dakar, Senegal (UNESCO, 2000). This was the first and most important forum in education at the dawn of the new century. Just like at the 1990 Jomtien Conference, the human right to education was re-affirmed at the Dakar Forum. National governments including the Zambian government, civil society groups, and development agencies met and adopted the Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments. They committed to achieving six specific education goals by 2015. These are: Goal 1: Expand early childhood care and education; Goal 2: Provide free and compulsory primary education for all; Goal 3: Promote learning and life skills for youths and adults; Goal 4: Increase adult literacy by 50 per cent; Goal 5: Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015; and Goal 6: Improve the quality of education (UNESCO, 2000).

The participants at the Conference through the Dakar Framework for Action declared that by 2015, all children of primary-school age would participate in free schooling of acceptable quality and that gender inequalities in schooling would be eliminated. This means that all children, girls as well as boys including those who belong to minority groups, and those whose circumstances are particularly difficult go to school and finish primary school. It was also declared that by 2015 levels of adult illiteracy would be halved, early childhood care and education and learning opportunities for

youth and adults would be greatly increased, and all aspects of education would be improved (UNESCO, 2000).

The Dakar Framework for Action marked a step forward in four different ways: it re-affirmed the right of all children to a free education: a commitment that was not covered in the 1990 Jomtien declaration - primary education must be entirely free of charge and be compulsory for every child ; it called upon governments in every developing country to prepare national action plans as from 2002, setting out how each will achieve the international development target of universal primary education by 2015; it recognised that many low income countries lack the financial resources to meet this goal within a reasonable time-frame; and it included an unequivocal commitment to supporting national economic reforms within an international initiative that the international community will deliver on its collective commitment by developing with immediate effect a global initiative aimed at developing the strategies and mobilising the resources needed to provide effective support to national efforts (UNESCO, 2000). Thus, the main thrust at the Dakar Conference was the need to achieve Education for All.

However, in spite of outlining the goals above, the Conference participants were not explicit on how these were to be achieved. EFA goals appear to be too broad and ambitious as they exceed financial, material and human resources of many countries especially in the developing world. Additionally, these EFA goals are uniform for all the countries irrespective of the different environments of developing and developed nations. For example, the same year of achieving these EFA goals was set as 2015 for

all countries in the world irrespective of unstable political environments and/or economic environments of some countries. For example, the provision of EFA in conflict - affected Third World countries such as Rwanda and Somalia is been hampered. According to the 2011 UNESCO Global Monitoring Report titled 'The hidden Crisis of Armed Conflict and Education', armed conflict is robbing 28 million children of primary school age of an education by exposing them to targeted attacks on schools and other abuses (UNESCO, 2011:15). Though Northern governments have pledged to increase aid to finance education in Southern countries, there are no clear guidelines to ensure this is done. Indeed, most Northern governments have not honoured their promises and commitments (Osttveit, 2000; Watkins, 2000).

In the same year of the Dakar Conference, the year 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted, two of which - Universal Primary Education and elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education - were considered as vital to the elimination of extreme poverty. Considerable momentum has built up across many countries of the world in support of the commitments expressed in the MDGs (Aikman and Unterhalter, 2005). There is a growing demand for education and for governments to fulfil the promises that they made at the Millennium Conference. As Aikman and Unterhalter (2005) observe that during the Global week of Action for Education in April 2005, hundreds of thousands of activists in 110 countries encouraged governments and international organisations to recognise education as the key to ending poverty and to fulfil their millennium commitments. For Northern donor governments, there is pressure to meet financial commitments made in 2000 and for governments of developing countries, there is



pressure to develop good quality plans and transparent means of achieving EFA (Aikman and Unterhalter, 2005).

Progress has been recorded in the provision of universal primary education in the 2000s. Hartwell (2008) notes that from 2000, the date of the Education for All Conference in Dakar, to 2004, it is estimated that there was ‘significant’ progress in expanding access to primary schooling by increasing enrolment rates, particularly in developing countries. UNESCO (2007) reports, between 1999 and 2004 the average primary Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) increased from 55% to 65% in Sub-Saharan Africa and from 77% to 86% in South and West Asia. For the world as a whole, the global Net Enrolment Ratio in primary education rose from 83% in 1999 to 86% in 2004 (UNESCO, 2007:24).

Additionally, UNESCO (2009) gives a report on the progress made towards achieving the goal of providing universal primary education. UNESCO (2009) reports that some impressive gains have been recorded. The Net Enrolment Ratio for developing countries increased between 1999 and 2006 at twice the rate of the 1990s (UNESCO, 2009:1). In Sub-Saharan Africa, it rose from 54% to 70% (UNESCO, 2009:1).

In South and West Asia the net enrolment ratio increased from 75% to 86% (UNESCO, 2009:1). Also some remarkable achievements were recorded: Ethiopia more than doubled its net enrolment ratio to 71%; the enrolment ratios for Benin and

the United Republic of Tanzania moved from around 50% to more than 80% (UNESCO, 2009:9). The number of children out of school has declined since Dakar.

UNESCO (2009:9) reports that there were 28 million fewer out-of-school children in 2006 than when countries met in Dakar in 2000. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the number of primary-school-age children not in school dropped from 37 million to 18 million (UNESCO, 2009:9).

Table 3 below shows that net enrolment rates increased in many countries.

**Table 3:** Net Enrolment Ratios in Primary Education by region, 1999 and 2007

<b>Region</b>	<b>1999 (%)</b>	<b>2007 (%)</b>
World	82	87
Developing Countries	80	86
Developed Countries	97	96
Countries in transition	88	91
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>73</b>
Arab States	78	84
Central Asia	88	92
South and West Asia	74	86
Central and Eastern Europe	91	92

**Source:** UNESCO (2010:62), EFA Global Monitoring Report, Reaching the Marginalised.

Although, globally, there has been notable progress towards gender parity<sup>4</sup> at primary and secondary levels, many countries especially in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa did not accomplish the goal of parity by 2005. In 2006, of the 176 countries with data, 59 had attained gender parity in both primary and secondary education - 20 countries more than in 1999 (UNESCO, 2009).

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4. Gender parity can be defined as the equal participation of both sexes in different levels of education.

At the primary level, about two-thirds of countries had attained parity (UNESCO, 2009). However, more than half the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab States had not met the target. Only 37% of countries worldwide had achieved gender parity at secondary level (UNESCO, 2009). Twenty-eight countries had gender parity indexes of less than 0.90 in 2007; of these eighteen are found in Sub-Saharan Africa. These countries have not yet met the goal of gender parity at primary level, set for 2005 (Aikman and Unterhalter, 2005; UNESCO, 2009, 2010). For Zambia, like other developing countries, the goal of gender parity - equal numbers of girls as boys attending school by 2005 was far too ambitious as it exceeded financial, human, material and logistic resources of the country. The gender gap, therefore, has persisted in many developing countries especially Sub-Saharan Africa. UNICEF estimates that across all developing countries the gender gap is 10 percentage points (UNICEF, 2003). As pointed out above in this chapter, most girls fail to continue with their education because of household chores, teenage pregnancies or early marriages.

Herz and Spurling (2004) note that two-thirds of all those who have no access to education are girls and women. Sixty-five million girls never even start school, and an estimated 100 million do not complete primary education, often because its quality is poor and their opportunities are far from equal to those of boys (Herz and Spurling, 2004:2). In Zambia, at the middle basic and secondary school levels some girls fail to continue with their education due to domestic chores, early marriages or them becoming pregnant. GRZ (2008) observes that in Zambia, girls are married off by their parents when they are still very young at school-going age. This is especially true in rural areas. Cultural values and beliefs have played a role in hindering some

girls from progressing with their schooling or even from accessing it altogether. GRZ(2008) notes that attitudes and beliefs obtaining in patriarchal systems of society in some parts of Zambia that rate men as superior to women adversely affect how men regard women especially when it comes to equal participation in decision-making, economic empowerment and access to education. In situations where family resources are not enough and parents have to make a choice who to send to school, the boy and not the girl is likely to be sent to school. Hartwell (1998) confirms that poor, rural families with many children often do not choose to spend what little money they have to pay school expenses for their girl-children. Many rural families and communities see schooling for a girl as a waste of resources as she will soon get married. Also, even if she were to continue with her education, it would be her husband and in-laws to benefit and not her family members. Indeed, if such a situation is allowed to continue the Education for All Goal of achieving universal primary education by 2015 may not be achieved.

UNESCO (2010:55) observes that the number of children out of school was 72 million in 2007. The majority of those out of school were girls accounting for 54% of the out-of-school population (UNESCO, 2010:54). Sub-Saharan Africa still has a large proportion of the number of children who are out-of-school. As UNESCO (2010) reports:

Fully one-quarter of sub-Saharan Africa's primary school age children were out of school in 2007-and the region accounted for nearly 45% of the global out-of-school population (UNESCO, 2010:56).

The most significant factor why Sub-Saharan Africa continues to record a large percentage of the number of school-going age children who are not in school is poverty. Many parents cannot afford to pay school fees.

Indeed, the education sector in many developing countries is faced with several problems and challenges which hinder children from accessing Basic education. For example, in Zambia challenges include: limited construction of schools in places where long distances negatively affect school attendance; high poverty levels leading to some children failing to enrol in schools; and low quality of education marked by poor achievement levels, poor learning environment, lack of learning and teaching materials, and high pupil-teacher ratio (the average national ratio for grades 1-9 is 57:1) (GRZ, 2008:6). Even though, Zambia declared the policy of “free” and compulsory primary education policy from grades 1-7 in 2002 access problems have continued. Sikwibele (2003) notes that in Zambia the free education policy was designed to bring back to school all the children who dropped out and all those who previously had no access to education, especially the orphans and vulnerable children and other children in difficult circumstances. However, as Sikwibele (2003) observes that many orphans and vulnerable children are still out of school or attending community schools in Zambia. This is because many parents are unable to pay school fees in private or public schools and instead send their children to community schools which essentially offer ‘free’ education.

Table 4 below is showing the number of out-of -school children by region in 2007.

**Table 4:** Number and percent of children and adolescents of primary, lower secondary or basic education age not enrolled in primary, secondary or higher education, 2007

	<b>Primary education</b>		<b>Lower secondary education</b>		<b>Basic education (Primary and lower secondary combined)</b>	
	<b>Total of out-of school</b>	<b>As % of the primary age group</b>	<b>Total out-of school</b>	<b>As % of the lower secondary age group</b>	<b>Total of out-of school</b>	<b>As % of the basic education age group</b>
	(000)		(000)		(000)	
World	71 791	11	70 921	18	142 712	14
Developing Countries	68 638	12	68 197	21	136 835	15
Developed Countries	2 334	4	1538	4	3 872	4
Countries in transition	819	6	1 187	6	2 006	6
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	<b>32 226</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21 731</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>53 957</b>	<b>30</b>
Arab States	5 752	14	4 009	18	9 761	15
Central Asia	271	5	302	4	573	4
South and West Asia	18 031	10	29 905	28	47 937	17

Central and Eastern Europe	1 552	7	1 452	7	3 004	7
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**Source:** UNESCO (2010:74), EFA Global Monitoring Report, Reaching the Marginalised

Hartwell (2008: 142) writes: “A recent analysis of these trends reveals that within those countries where two-thirds of all out-of-school children reside, the greatest challenge is to reach those underserved areas”. In most cases, those underserved children live in rural areas. In its analysis of the trends in the number of children out-of-school, UNESCO Institute of Statistics suggests that 82% of those out of school reside in rural areas (UNESCO, 2005). Indeed, the majority of schools in developing countries tended to house more children from better off persons and urban areas than poorer persons and rural areas, and more boys than girls. In her work on the challenge of researching education in Commonwealth African Countries, Donn writes:

While significant progress may have been made in developing education for all, and particularly universal access to education, disparities exist in enrolment and performance between localities and provinces, between educational provision in the metropolis and the rural area, between schools in the same locality, between genders and within and between socio-economic groups (Donn, 2005:86).

The statistics in Table 4 above show the magnitude of the problem and challenge that lie ahead in providing Basic education to all. Practitioners, researchers, academics,



NGOs, donors and other development agencies have long acknowledged the importance of providing Basic education to all. To ensure access and retention of all children in school has been the major policy debate in many developing countries. Since the 1960s when UPE agenda was first tabled, the various policies in most developing countries have not been able to deliver the kind of education that caters for all children. Issues of Education for All are about the poor and the marginalised in society. To realise and fulfil the Jomtien declaration of UPE and Dakar declaration of Education for All, girls, the poor and the marginalised must be given opportunity to realise their inherent potential by giving them access to quality Basic education. Cultural values which encourage early marriages among girls as well as teenage pregnancies and household chores and school factors such as school location (long distance covered to get to school) and poor sanitation facilities in many schools in Sub-Saharan Africa must be addressed.

However, in spite of the Dakar declaration with regards improving the quality of education, the quality of education has continued to decline especially in developing countries. As UNESCO (2010) observes:

Many countries are failing the quality test. Out -of- school children face obvious disadvantages, yet less attention has been paid to the fact that millions of children emerge from primary school each year without having acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills. Unable to formulate or read a simple sentence, these children are ill equipped to

make the transition to secondary school – let alone enter employment markets (UNESCO, 2010:104).

Quality in education is crucial for the achievement of EFA. The notion of quality in education encompasses more than simply a better school environment, more qualified teaching staff, and an adequate supply of teaching and learning materials. Quality also means as Aikman and Unterhalter write:

... the framing of the curriculum, the content and form of learning materials, the nature of the pedagogy , and teacher-pupil relations.

Quality requires gender-sensitive use of human resources, and considerations of gender in the allocation of finances. Quality education entails a concern to include the views of all members of a community, and to take account of local languages and cultures. A quality education is not therefore acquired in isolation from the social setting in which students live. It embraces the notion of education as a transformative process which promotes social change and contributes to building a just and democratic society. A quality education rejects gender discrimination and social injustice. Quality education cannot be achieved without gender equality and equity (Aikman and Unterhalter, 2005:4).

The 2015 target may not be accomplished if countries will not strengthen their focus on out-of-school children and improving the quality of education. UNESCO (2010) observes that getting all children into school by 2015 is still feasible, however, the goal will not be accomplished with a business-as-usual approach. If the world were to continue the linear trend for 1999 to 2007, some 56 million children could still be out of school by 2015 (UNESCO, 2010:54). In trying to achieve Education for All goal, it should be clearly stated that getting children in school at an appropriate age is not an end in itself. It is also about ensuring that they stay in school to complete a full cycle of good quality education. UNESCO (2009) argues that getting children into school is a necessary condition for attaining UPE, however, it is not a sufficient one. What counts is all children entering school at an appropriate age, progressing smoothly through the education system and completing a full cycle (UNESCO, 2009; 2010). Therefore, it is increasingly being realised that strengthening partnerships is one of the most critical requirements for successful provision of EFA. The 2000 Dakar Framework for Action stipulates: “More effective collaboration and equal partnership between governments and NGOs must be encouraged” (UNESCO, 2000:60). In recent years, NGOs and international donors in many countries have partnered with governments in areas of education policy, national educational financing and providing alternative Basic education service delivery systems such as non-formal education offered in community schools. As UNESCO (2010:275) confirms: “Non-government organisations have been at the forefront of efforts to provide education opportunities for marginalized groups”. NGOs have a responsibility for holding aid donors and governments to account for their commitments at the Dakar Forum (UNESCO, 2010). In fact, as noted in chapter 3, INGOs and national NGOs have been seen as crucially important players in the implementation of education

policies. Indeed, one may wonder whether INGOs and national NGOs are able to address the problems and challenges seen in education in Zambia, especially as INGOs and national NGOs are important stakeholders in education. *Therefore, it becomes important to investigate if the participation of NGOs in Basic Education Policy Reform in Lusaka province of Zambia can enhance the achievement of EFA by 2015.*

Indeed, various sources suggest that the current global agenda of education for development, which form EFA, represents a compromise between neo-liberal economic priorities and social democratic principles, i.e. a balance between an approach to education as a basic human right and the more instrumentalist human capital approach (see Bona, 2007; King, 2007; and Mundy, 2006). As a result, one may argue that the EFA agenda remains inadequate to addressing the massive educational challenges in developing countries. Human rights and the more instrumentalist human capital approaches are discussed in detail in the next section.

## **2.2. Human Capital and Human Rights Approaches to Education**

There seem to be two main doctrines guiding the provision of education globally. One approach perhaps correctly defined as Human Capital and market driven is being propagated by the World Bank and the other “Human rights” is being promoted by the United Nations (Syachaba, 2005). The World Bank is the world’s largest deliverer of education and devotes considerable resources to education (Ilon, 2002). The World Bank considers education as a form of ‘human capital’ that is capable of producing high returns of economic growth (see Shultz, 1993). Thus, the World Bank regards education as an instrument in bringing about development and poverty reduction. The former World Bank President James Wolfensohn, opens the 1999 World Bank Education Policy Statement –*The Education Sector Strategy* with the following statement: “All agree that the single most important key to development and poverty alleviation is education” (World Bank, 1999).

On the other hand, the United Nations regards education as a human right. United Nations’ thinking of education was also influenced by the work of an Indian economist, Amartya Sen. In the early 1990s the work of Amartya Sen was communicated to a wider audience through the United Nations Human Development Report (Watkins, 2000). Watkins (2000) explains that at a time when development thinking was dominated by economic indicators of welfare, Sen shifted the debate to define poverty in terms of ‘capabilities’ (a term referring to the potential of poor people to do the things that contribute to their welfare). According to Sen (1997) low income is one aspect of poverty, but deprivation was about something more than

material wealth which is also about the absence of ‘fundamental freedoms’. These ‘fundamental freedoms’ included attributes associated with good health and education, and the ability to influence institutions affecting one’s life (Sen, 1997). Thus, the provision of education must not be justified in terms of its instrumental value but in terms of its intrinsic human value, underpinned by strong moral and legal foundations (UNESCO, 2002). Similarly, the UN and its agencies consider education as a human right. The right to education is articulated in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). “Everyone has the right to education” (United Nations, 1949:6). The UN regards education as an indispensable means of unlocking and protecting other human rights by providing the scaffolding that is essential to secure good health, liberty, security, economic well-being, and participation in social and political activity (UNESCO, 2002). This is the rights based approach to education. Indeed, where the right of education is assured, people’s access and enjoyment of other rights can improve.

The World Bank’s view of education is aimed at profit maximisation so as to promote the market. As Tikly (2004) notes:

Whilst the WTO and the Bretton Woods institutions have historically served to promote the empowerment of the market with a minimal role for the state and rapid liberalisation, most UN agencies operate under the belief that public intervention is necessary to ensure basic needs and human rights (Tikly, 2004: 176-177).

Developing countries are often caught between the policy imperatives of these global organisations in contradictory ways including in the sphere of education and training (Mundy, 1998). The Government of Zambia has acknowledged in its education policy that education is a right for each individual (Ministry of Education, 1996), which is in line with UN requirements but it has also incorporated the view by Bretton Woods institutions such as the World Bank that education is a form of human capital. The Ministry of Education in Zambia (1996) in its education policy, *Educating Our Future*, stipulates: ‘the demands of national development require that the Government pays attention to the role education plays in human capital formation, particularly in developing the types of knowledge, skills, values and competencies that are necessary for economic development and social welfare (Ministry of Education, 1996:2). However, many scholars argue that free-market prescriptions have increased inequalities in education (Watkins, 2000; Hill; et al, 2008; Kumar and Hill, 2009), as will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. They have impacted upon education discourse in many countries including Zambia. In many countries across the globe there have been attempts to link education to markets as a means of expanding education provision. I now turn to markets and education policy in the next section.

## **2.3. MARKETS AND EDUCATION POLICY**

### **2.3.1. Defining Policy**

Education policy has been defined differently by various authors although generally a policy is seen as a statement about practice, a set of mandatory directives that regulate decisions and can be at any level of an education system driven by those in a position of authority (Miller-Grandvaux, *et al*, 2002). There might be school-level policy or national level policy. Haddad and Demsky (1994:4) define policy as “An explicit or implicit decision or group of decisions which may set out directives for guiding future decisions, or initiate, sustain or retard action, or guide the implementation of previous decisions”. Or Policy is:

...a process of bricolage; a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere... Most policies are ramshackle, compromise, hit or miss affairs, that are reworked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex process of influence, text production, dissemination and, ultimately, re-creation in contexts of practice (Ball, 1998: 127).

Education policy... deals with all texts, apart from curricula, which seek to frame, constitute and change educational practices (Lingard and Ozga, 2007: 2).

Policies are often formulated in response to a problem or set of problems. It may be that there are no policies in place on a certain problem that has arisen or there are



shortcomings in the existing policies. Therefore, a policy/policies will be formulated in order to find a solution/solutions. I now consider policy developments in relation to neo-liberalism.

### **2.3.2. Neo-liberalism**

It is difficult to discuss markets in education without referring to global neo-liberalism. This is because markets in many countries have come about in this era of globalised neo-liberalism. In this section, I will discuss neo-liberalism and then move on to the material force particularly liberalised markets, the clearly defined features of neo-liberalism which affect the economy, and indeed education.

Fairclough (2003) draws our attention to Bourdieu (1998) who described neo-liberalism as a political project for facilitating the re-structuring and re-scaling of social relations in accordance with the demands of an unrestrained global capitalism. This implies that neo-liberalism is a political ideology that requires a strong state to facilitate the reforming of the economy and restructuring of social relations for profit maximisation in a free market economy.

The neo-liberal agenda is now dominant in development discourse and action. A decade ago Cammock pointed out that 'the new development orthodoxy' favours a set of prescriptions for developing and developed economies alike. He argues further that the new development paradigm represents an overturning of the welfare statist / social democratic development orthodoxies of the 1960s and indeed of the institutionalised socialist version of the state-led development, it may be considered as the

re-emergence of a type of capitalism (Cammack, 2002). This kind of capitalism puts emphasis on neo-liberal economics and liberal democracy. The associated economic and social policies of neo-liberalism became central to the state's role in America under Ronald Reagan in the late 1970s, in the UK under Margaret Thatcher in the 1970s, and in New Zealand under the influence of Roger Douglas, the finance minister of the Fourth Labour Government, in the 1980s (Olssen , 1996:338).

The main prescriptions of neo-liberalism include 'an emphasis on market principles and production of profits; a minimalist role for the state; deregulated labor market; and flexible forms of governance' (Rizvi *et al*, 2005:12). These main principles of neo-liberalism are also highlighted by such terms such as the 'Washington Consensus'. The term, Washington Consensus, refers to the preferred policy prescriptions of the world's developed nations and mainly Washington-based agencies such as the World Bank and IMF during the 1980s and 1990s. These preferred policy precepts included the policy of fiscal disciplining, new public spending priorities, financial liberalisation, trade liberalisation, increased foreign direct investment, knowledge economy, decentralisation, and public-private partnerships (Williamson, 1993). Hill (2003) and (Kumar and Hill, 2009) also draw our attention to the requirements of the current globally neo-liberalism within national states which include: the provision of a market in goods and services-including private sector involvement in welfare, social, educational and other state services; and the restructuring of the management of the welfare state on the basis of a corporate managerialist model imported from the world of business. Also, the needs of the economy dictating the principal aims of the school education, the world of business as

well is to supply a model of how it is provided and managed (Hill, 2003; Hill and Kumar, 2009).

Evans (1991) draws our attention to the view that neo-liberalism is based on the assumption that 'liberalisation of the market is the key to development policy reform, and that this will lead to the realisation of comparative advantage and maximisation of the gains from international trade' (Evans, 1991:50). He explains that the neo-liberals argue that firstly, in the presence of widespread market imperfections and distortions, it may be preferable to remove as many restrictions affecting the free play of market forces as possible rather than to retain some intervention in the market in an attempt to overcome the consequences of some of the market imperfections. Secondly, when full consideration is taken that the government might lack perfect information, neo-liberals claim that an imperfect market solution may be much better than imperfect government intervention (Evans, 1991). Indeed, even twenty years later, authors note that this is the neo-liberal view of the market which is encouraging states to deregulate its power, privatise parastatals and abolish trade barriers through International agencies such as IMF and later the World International Trade (WTO). As Donn and Al Manthri (2010:20) note, 'Under the WTO and during the 1990s and 2000s, almost all countries agreed, in principle, to the emerging global free-trade regime'.

### **2.3.3. Markets and Education**

The World Bank and its twin agency, the IMF through the structural adjustment programmes and prescriptions have usually pushed economic policy reforms on developing countries including Zambia such as liberalisation of the market and privatisation of basic services.

In order to propagate the market economy, the World Bank in its World Development Report in 1991 called upon governments to play the following four roles: (i) provide a stable macroeconomic foundation in order to inspire the confidence of the private sector, (ii) create a competitive environment within which enterprise could flourish, (iii) integrate their economies into the global economy and (iv) ‘invest in people’ to supplement the market where needs were unmet in the areas of education, health, nutrition and family planning. One may argue that the need for profitability is the chief end of the market economy.

Markets have promoted inequities in education. Though the World Bank and the IMF seem to promote ‘equality’ in their approach the reality is that their approach has worsened inequalities in education. Markets exacerbate existing inequalities (Ball, 1993; Hill 2003; Seddon, 1997; Klees, 2010). For example, school systems in Australia and the USA, racialised social class patterns of inequality have increased due to marketised school systems (Hill, 2003). This is because the poor cannot afford the high tuition fees demanded by certain schools. Besides, the global market has led

to budget cuts in education in a number of countries across the world which has resulted into the stoppage of offering free nationally funded education services by some governments. This is especially true at secondary and tertiary levels of education where user fees have been introduced in many developing countries. All this is being done in the name of cost efficiency. What we are seeing in policy formulation during this era of global neo-liberalism is a cost-benefit analysis where certain policy choices are seen as more important under economic rationality than concerns for social equity.

Privatisation of schools in many developing countries has encouraged inequalities in education. As Hill, et al (2008:77) note:

Increasing the role of the private sector (including for-profit) organisations at primary, secondary and tertiary levels creates unequal access to schooling based on social class, despite compensatory measures, such as subsidies, intended to limit the stratifying effects of capitalisation.

This is because most private schools usually admit children from richer families who are more equipped to succeed at school, leaving the public/state schools to enrol more challenging students with greater needs. Additionally, public schools generally have fewer resources than private schools, and therefore need resources especially financial resources from pupils from richer families to replenish their schools. Yet, the World

Bank's corporate lending arm, the International Finance Corporation (2001:5) argues that fee-paying educational institutions can "improve" equity:

[p]rivate education can directly benefit the lowest socio-economic groups by attracting families who can afford some level of fee away from the public system, thereby increasing capacity and per student spending for the students who remain in the public system. Similarly, the emergence of private tertiary institutions allows governments to reduce funding of such institutions and instead to invest in lower levels of education, thus improving distributive efficiency.

However, it is not always the case that admitting pupils from richer households in private schools will lead to increase in "education investments" for children in public schools will result in increase in equity. As Reimers (2005) writes:

[t]he poor have less access to preschool, secondary, and tertiary education; they also attend schools of lower quality where they are socially segregated. Poor parents have fewer resources to support the education of their children, and they have less financial, cultural, and social capital to transmit. Only policies that explicitly address inequality, with a major redistributive purpose, therefore, could make education an

equalising force in social opportunity (Reimers,2005:55).

Therefore, education policy must give every person an opportunity to access education.

Economic aims are a decisive element of market driven policies such as privatisation. Apple (2004:32) argues: “For neoliberals, the world in essence is a vast supermarket”. Therefore, schools are seen as been engaged in business, selling the commodity education. Apple writes: “In effect, education is seen as simply one more product like bread, cars and television” (Apple, 2000:6).

However, as Hill (2009: xii) notes, “Education, however, is not a commodity to be bought and sold. One can buy the means of an education, but not the hard graft of autonomous learning itself”. Hence, one might argue the global market is incompatible with education. This is because the market excludes others from possession of profit while education is meant not to exclude others from possession. Privatisation of schools and other education providers, and the cutting of government subsidies to basic services such as education in many countries across the globe have resulted in the selection and exclusion of individuals. Parents are able to choose schools where to send their children and those who cannot afford to pay school fees are excluded from the school system.

In trying to satisfy the needs of ‘customers’ in education, there has been target setting and the drive to achieve specified outcomes. The stress is less on community and

equity, and rather more on individual advancement and the need to satisfy investors and influential customers (Donn and Al Manthri, 2010).

Markets aim at promoting economic interests. As Ball (1998) and Hill (2003) explain further that contemporary education policies tie together individual, consumer choice in education markets with rhetorics and politics aimed at furthering national economic interests. One of the principles guiding educational provision in Zambia is liberalisation. According to the Ministry of Education in Zambia in its official education policy outlines:

Under a liberalised educational system, the right of private organisations, individuals, religious bodies, and local communities to establish and control their own schools and other educational institutions is recognised and welcomed. Liberalisation of educational provision allows those with resources to establish such institutions and to run them in accordance with their own principles- subject, however, to stipulated rules and regulations. In this way, liberalisation contributes to expansion of educational opportunities while protecting the right of parents to send their children to educational institutions of their own choice , be they public, private, religious or communal (Ministry of Education, 1996:3).



However, consumer choice or parental choice of schools results in inequalities. Hill and Kumar (2009) draw our attention to the United Kingdom where the marketisation of education involved parental choice of schools exacerbated inequalities between schools. They explain that between 1979 and 1997, the government of the United Kingdom introduced new types of school in addition to the state, i.e., public schools in order to increase school choice of parents and their children. ‘The result of this “school choice” is that inequalities between schools have increased because in many cases the “parental choice” of schools has become the “schools’ choice” of the most desirable parents and children-and rejection of others’ (Hill and Kumar, 2009:15).

#### **2.3.4. Influence of Markets on Education Policy**

Since the end of the 1980s, the educational systems in a number of countries around the world, have been submitted to an unceasing flow of reforms (Hirtt, 2009:8). One wonders whether these reforms are necessitated by shortcomings observed in the existing system. These reforms include: decentralisation, growing school autonomy, programme deregulation, more attention to skills and less attention to knowledge, diverse partnerships between education and industry, massive introduction of Information and Communication Technology and rapid development of private, for-profit education (Hirtt, 2009). For neo-liberals, the answer would be ‘yes’. The transformation towards neo-liberalism involves both ‘re-structuring’ of relations between the economic, political and social domains (including the commodification and marketisation of fields like education - it becomes subject to the economic logic of the market), and the ‘re-scaling’ of relations between the different levels of social

life-the global, the regional (e.g. the European Union), the national, and the local (Fairclough, 2003).

Indeed, the move towards market driven policies entails vivid changes. World Bank (1991) reports:

The 1990s began with dramatic changes. Many countries in Eastern Europe and elsewhere initiated ambitious reforms of their economic and political systems. These reforms reflect both the accumulated evidence on economic policies and fundamental changes in the political environment. Not only in Eastern Europe, but also in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East... (World Bank, 1991: iii).

The process of rolling out the neo-liberal agenda gathered momentum in the 1991 World Development Report by the World Bank. This is evident in the words of the World Bank president Barber Conable in the foreword:

Experience shows that success in promoting economic growth and poverty reduction is most likely when governments complement markets; dramatic failures result when they conflict. The Report describes a market-friendly approach in which governments allow markets to function well, and in which governments concentrate their interventions on areas in which markets prove inadequate (World Bank, 1991: iii).

Though one might argue that during this era of global neo-liberalism, many governments, particularly in developing countries have not intervened to provide for the needs of their people even when markets have failed due to inadequate funds or have neglected their role in the pretext of promoting privatisation. Neo-liberalism demands a strong state to promote its interests whereby the role of state is seen as to provide a conducive environment in order to enable the market to operate. As Harvey notes,

The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police, and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks the state must not interfere (Harvey, 2005:2).

With regards to education policy earlier egalitarian views on education have been transformed with market oriented views, hence people now commonly see educational provisions in terms of their economic benefits. Education discourse in many countries is influenced by neo-liberal policies. Neo-liberalism does not promote egalitarian education system as it demands global markets. Apple (2000) notes that global markets have found inadequacies with the education system based on egalitarian

norms and values. This is because an egalitarian education system is not compatible with the neo-liberal values that characterise global markets. Egalitarian is based on equality of individuals. It avoids competition. However, markets encourage competition. Neo-liberals such as Michael Walzer do not accept a society without competition. Walzer (1980) is opposed to traditional, universalistic theories of distributive justice which demand equality where a good, which is currently monopolised by an individual or elite, is to be distributed equally around society. He argues that focusing on the issue of simple equality (or monopoly) lends itself to tyranny since breaking the monopoly in order to distribute the good equally necessitates both the centralisation of political power and continuous state intervention (Walzer, 1980).

Conversely, those opposed to markets in education view the current wave of educational reforms with suspicion. This is because the restructuring of schooling and education systems in a number of countries around the world, be it developed or developing, is being driven by the economic agenda. Seddon writes: “The notion of markets has, then, been central and quite explicit in contemporary education reforms in the UK and in the US. The Conservative UK government told us that marketising was what it was going to do and justifies its policy interventions in rosy terms, outlining all the good things that markets could and would do” (Seddon, 1997:170). There is emphasis on linking education to the market. The common feature is the marketisation of education in most of the developed countries, for example, Britain, USA, Australia and New Zealand (Hill, 2003; Hill and Kumar, 2009). It must be noted here that marketisation of education is also becoming a common feature in developing countries due to the influence of countries of the Global North.

One may ask, 'How does education fit in the economic agenda of market oriented policies?' Mulderrig (2003) and Levidow (2002) explain that in pursuit of the marketisation of education, New Public Managerialism - the importation into the old public services of the language and management style of private capital - have replaced the ethic and language and style of public service and duty. Education has been subordinated to international market goods including the language and self-conceptualisation of educators themselves (Levidow, 2002; Mulderrig, 2002, 2003). Educators have to learn the language of the market. Educators have no choice but to readjust in order to accommodate these changes which could be a challenge for them. Hill (2003) explains:

Within universities and vocational further education the language of education has been very widely replaced by the language of the market, where lecturer 'deliver the product', 'operationalize delivery' and 'facilitate clients' learning', within a regime of 'quality management and enhancement', where students have become 'customers' selecting 'modules' on a pick 'n' mix basis, where 'skill development' at Universities has surged in importance to the derogation of the

development of critical thought (Hill, 2003:8).

In this ideological work of markets in education, we are dealing primarily with issues of discourse. Fairclough (2006) asserts that language is a major discursive resource that is being used by supranational organisations and world leaders to establish their dominance. Supranational organisations such as the World Bank and IMF tend to focus on the rhetoric in their approach to policy. 'Generally speaking, those who focus on rhetoric are concerned with how representations of globalisation are used to support and legitimise actions and policies with particular arguments' (Fairclough, 2006:14). Indeed, policy makers across the world have served to bring about outcomes which are in line with the discourses they internalised. For instance, Margaret Thatcher, the Conservative former UK Prime Minister, was popularly known by the slogan 'There is no alternative' (shortened as TINA) (Ramos, 2006). This was a way in which Thatcher and her supporters demonstrated their belief that free-market capitalism was the only possible economic theory. Another example is Tony Blair, former UK Prime Minister who employed discursive resources and is often quoted as a primary example who mobilised language to invoke certain discourses to shape public opinion such as changing the name of Labour Party to 'New Labour' in order to win the confidence of the electorate, making them to believe that Labour had changed and could be trusted (see Fairclough, 2000).

Policy formulation normally connects education to the world of work in many countries. There is increasingly demand from and by education policy to conceptualise education in relation to work (Green, 1999). This is because students are regarded as human capital. For the neo-liberals, the world is intensely competitive economically, and students being future workers must be given the requisite skills and dispositions to compete efficiently and effectively (Apple, 2004). The World Bank

puts it this way: “Education should be effectively related to work and environment in order to improve, quantitatively and qualitatively, the knowledge and skills necessary for performing economic, social and other development functions” (World Bank, 1980:10). The World Bank is committed to neo-liberal economic framework.

The market has succeeded in bringing together, the political right and left wings in close consensus in the area of education (Apple, 2000; Whitty, 1997). The emerging consensus fosters the building of a knowledge economy and the means to achieve this is through ensuring choice, competition, standardisation of the curriculum, testing regimes and the development of life skills that sustain employment. Whereas in developed countries education policy is aimed towards building the knowledge economy, developing countries see it as a tool for reducing poverty and ensuring economic development. Due to the influence of supranational organisations such as the World Bank and the United Nations, the growing agenda in the developing World’s education is Universal Primary Education and Education for All with clear links to poverty alleviation. In Zambia, all the three policy documents (1977 Educational reforms, Focus on Learning, and Educating our Future) that have been in existence have considered access to Basic Education as the prime objective. However, despite the achievements that have been recorded in Basic Education, there are children of school going age who are still not in school and the quality of education is poor in Zambia as will be shown below. Table 5 below shows net enrolment ratios in primary education and literacy rate of 15-24 years in Zambia in 1990 and 2003.

**Table 5:** Net Enrolment Ratios in Primary Education and Literacy Rate of 15-24

years in Zambia, 1990 and 2003

Indicator	1990	2003
Net enrolment ratio in primary education	80%	76%
Girls	69%	75%
Boys	71%	71%
Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 7		
Girls	64%	73%
Boys	57%	66%
Literacy rate of 15-24 years old	71%	80%
Female	75%	70%
Male	71%	66%
	79%	75%

**Source:** Government of the Republic of Zambia (2003:7)

In 2003, the Net Enrolment Ratio in Primary Education in Zambia was 76% as shown in Table 5 above, implying that 24% of primary school age children were still not in school. Zambia, Ministry of Education (2003:22) adds: “The situation is even more critical for grades 8-9. The enrolment rates for grades 8-9 are approximately 190,000 of which girls represent 46 % of the total”. In 2003, only half of the pupils who left



grade 7 were able to find school places in grade 8, while just over one-fourth who left grade 9 proceeded to Grade 10 (Zambia, Ministry of Education, 2003:22-23).

With regards to the quality of education in Zambia, the learning achievements levels are low at Basic Education level. As the Government of Zambia through the Ministry of Education (2007:16) notes: “Learning achievement remains at low levels with mean scores in English and Mathematics in Grade 5, for example, standing at 33% and 34%, respectively”.

Hence favourite buzzwords used in the World Bank documents such as ‘quality’, ‘access’, ‘equity’, and ‘partnership’ are more policy rhetoric than reality. Klees writes:

One of the most appealing elements of the rhetoric on partnering has been the idea of multilateral and bilateral aid agencies collaborating with NGOs and other civil society organizations, with the rationale of involving grassroots participation and local knowledge. However, we need to keep in mind that this partnering with NGOs began in the 1980s as a direct result of the ideological shift in the U.S. and the U.K. to neo-liberal policies that emphasised a diminished role for the public sector. Working with NGOs instead of governments became part of the de-legitimisation of government (Klees , 2002:110) .

In many countries in Africa, national NGOs appear not to have played an active role in education policy reform. Instead, “powerful outsiders” such as donors and international NGOs have spoken with the loudest voices in education policy debates. Practical examples will be helpful here. The study by Miller-Grandvaux, *et al* (2002) on the role of NGOs in Basic Education in Africa showed that in Guinea, Mali, Ethiopia and Malawi, international NGOs have been at the forefront of trying to influence national education policy process. In Guinea, local and national NGOs have been entirely absent from the policy arena. In Mali, national NGOs have played an important role in the Groupe Pivot (a grouping of national and international NGOs working in the education sector in Mali), however, Save the Children and World Education (international NGOs) were the driving force of the campaign in that country to change policies regarding community schools. In Ethiopia, ActionAid and Pact gave support to local NGOs in efforts to change local curriculum policy. In Malawi, national NGOs are part of a coalition of national and international NGOs and the Alliance which includes NGOs, donors and government, even though Action Aid and Oxfam have clearly taken the lead in creating both association (Miller-Grandvaux, *et al*, 2002).

One might ask whether national NGOs’ voices would be heard at all by most governments in Africa without the support of international NGOs. One might also ask whose interests these NGOs are advancing in policy debates. Is it for the intended beneficiaries, their own, or the funder? Policy is evidently a matter of the ‘authoritative allocation of values’; policies are the operational statements of values, ‘statements of prescriptive intent’ (Kogan, 1975:55). As Ball (1990) argues that policies cannot be divorced from interests, from conflict, from domination or from

justice. For example, the involvement of foreign aid in education inevitably raises questions about external influence. Ali (2009) argues that in Pakistan international aid agencies possess huge influence because of their capacity to fund education development.

Indeed, a major problem of education policy in most of the developing countries including Zambia is their reliance on foreign aid and loans to bridge the budget deficit and finance their educational development plans. As a consequence, education policies in most developing countries are significantly influenced by the multilateral donor agencies' agenda. Brock-Utne (2000) in her writings on 'Who formulates Educational Policies in Africa?' states that the World Bank is the most powerful institution deciding on and formulating educational policies in Sub-Saharan Africa. She also mentions that bilateral donor agencies are also involved in this work. As seen above, the World Bank has embraced the neo-liberal policies and has influenced many countries in both developed and developing parts of the world. The World Bank's and other International Financial Institutions' agenda for education is to make profits from education as it is seen as business. As Hill and Kumar (2009:21) note, "Business wants education fit for business-to make schooling and higher education subordinate to the personality, ideological, and economic requirements of capital, and to make sure schools produce compliant, ideologically indoctrinated, procapitalist, effective workers." One may argue that the education that is advocated by the World Bank and other International Financial Institutions is one which is aimed at training people to serve the interests of globalisation (i.e., the global market) instead of educating people to advance their lives and the lives of their communities.

Such influences impede government's efforts to develop its policies and plans free of external interference, and push for short term measures to fulfil the immediate requirements of lenders rather than concerted policies and plans to maximise the effects of meagre resources in line with domestic priorities (Ali, 2005).

In summary, one might argue that market driven policies have failed to resolve issues such as access, inequalities and quality in education. Abdi and Ellis (2007) draw our attention to the fact that market driven policies have led to the collapse of educational and social systems throughout the “developing world”, and especially during the period of the World Bank's increasing domination of national education systems. They further point out that the formal educational system is failing to meet the needs of most Zambians due to its poor performance caused by inadequate funding of the system as most funds are diverted to debt servicing, a reality that should not be unlinked from the globally dominant designs of corporate neo-liberal globalisation, supported by the policies of the IFIs (Abdi and Ellis, 2007). This came about because the Zambian government embraced the Structural Adjustment Programme and, as will be seen in the next section, through adherence to market driven policies in Zambia, the government was forced to reduce spending on education. In addition, some parents became unable to send their children to school due to financial challenges caused by poverty. It will be argued that this has been exacerbated by market driven policies packaged in the Structural Adjustment Programme. This has adversely affected the education system in Zambia as it is unable to cater for every child who needs education and to provide education of good quality.

### **2.3.5. Market Driven Policies in Zambia**

The 1980s and early 1990s saw a wave of neo-liberalism breaking across countries in the developing world (Hanson and Hentz, 1999:479). Economic decline in Zambia, as elsewhere in other parts of Africa compelled national governments to borrow heavily from international banks such as the World Bank and the IMF which resulted in many governments in Africa embracing market oriented policies due to conditionalities attached to loans. Sharp economic decline was experienced in many parts of Africa in the 1970s and 1980s (Thompson, 1997). For example, in Zambia the crisis in the economy occurred from the mid-1970s and was caused by declining copper prices on the international market coupled with a rise in world oil prices (Kelly, 1991; Lungwangwa, 1999). The economy of Zambia was adversely affected as it depended on copper as its major export and main foreign earner. GRZ-UNDP (1996) explains that as early as the 1970s, when copper prices fell, the Government of Zambia sought assistance from the IMF to rectify imbalances in the balance of payments. By the mid-1980s, Zambia was borrowing heavily and falling deeper into external debt such that total debt stock grew from US \$ 3.25 billion in 1980, to US \$ 4.05 billion in 1985, to US \$ 7.2 billion in 1990 (Henriot, 1997:41).

However, unable to meet debt servicing requirements and with foreign exchange diminishing, the government led by the first Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda agreed to begin economic reforms insisted upon by the World Bank and IMF as conditions for further assistance. Thus in Zambia, the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were first implemented in the early 1980s by the one-party

regime of Kenneth Kaunda's United National Independence Party (Hanson and Hentz, 1999; Larmer, 2005). However, the government led by the former President Kenneth Kaunda showed little commitment to the reforms or to compliance with the associated IMF and World Bank conditionalities. This was mainly because the resulting cuts in state funding of health, education, and food fuelled the rising discontent among many Zambians. As a result, the government decided to abandon Structural Adjustment Programme reforms. On 1 May 1987, the former President Kenneth Kaunda and his supporting party, UNIP, abruptly broke with IMF programme as they regarded International Financial Institutions as neo-colonial (Hanson and Hentz, 1999:482). The Kaunda regime viewed the IMF/World Bank conditionalities as harsh.

However, SAPs appeared again in Zambia due to changes in political government. The Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) was elected in 1991 after 17 years of a single party, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) led by Kenneth Kaunda. The MMD was elected on a platform built on neo-liberal policies (market-oriented policies), which were described as "too aggressive for even the IMF's tastes" (Hanson and Hentz, 1999:483). The MMD in its campaign document, the MMD manifesto committed to implement a liberal economic reform programme. Indeed, the MMD Government fully implemented the neo-liberal policies which were market oriented packaged in the Structural Adjustment policies influenced by the World Bank and the IMF. As Larmer (2005:30) points out, 'the MMD Government, led by the former Chairman General of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions Frederick Chiluba (previously a leading critic of IMF-influenced policies), implemented one of the most radical programmes of economic liberalisation in Sub-Saharan Africa'. This pleased the donor community. "With donors eager to promote

an African ‘success story’ of dual reforms, as one of the few countries in sub-Saharan Africa to do so, Zambia experienced substantial growth in official development assistance (ODA) in the immediate period after 1991” (Rakner, 2003:12).

The MMD adopted neo-liberal policies by accepting to implement Structural Adjustment Programmes. As Hanson and Hentz (1999:480) point out, “Neoliberal ideas travel via an array of policy-related activities including technical advice, negotiations over specific conditions of lending, and debates that provide the background to policy making.” These SAP policies included: imposition of user fees for health and education, removing subsidies from basic commodities such as maize meal, imposing a strictly balanced budget, devaluation of the kwacha (Zambia’s currency), privatisation of large government corporations (parastatals), reform (down-sizing) of the civil service, and trade liberalisation and reduced price controls ( Kelly, *et al*, 1991; Henriot, 1997; Situmbeko and Zulu, 2004).

As it was pointed out in chapter 1, the philosophical rationale for educational provision in Zambia is informed by neo-liberal market policies which include principles of liberalisation, decentralisation, partnership, and accountability (Zambia, Ministry of Education, 1996). These market driven policies have continued in Zambia in spite of the change of government which occurred in September, 2011. The new government under the Patriot Front Party has continued running education based on the 1996 education policy ‘Educating our Future’ which is the official education policy.

Even though, the MMD was explicit in its manifesto that once voted to power it would implement SAP policies, the general voting public did not have much an idea of what this would mean. Henriot (1997) observes that ‘The central issue in the 1991 election was simple: Change the government. Kaunda had lost popularity and a vote for Chiluba was not necessarily a vote for all the details of the SAP but for the rejection of Kaunda.’ The implementation of SAPs in Zambia meant that families were now required to pay school fees. It is important to note that while there had always been some payment expected for schooling, it was minimal and therefore affordable even by the very poor. But expenses had arisen sharply in the period 1992 and 1994 (Henriot, 1996). Actually, the steep increase in school fees had happened at the same time that the income earning capacity of many Zambians had been reduced through retrenchments, agricultural sector decline and so forth.

In addition, universities suffered funding cuts, and the state was pressed to devote more money to servicing IMF loans than to social development programmes such as health care and education. Alexander and Mbali (2004) report that in 2004 slightly under one third of Zambia’s budget was going toward debt-servicing. One might argue that giving loans to developing countries (in most cases far more money than they could afford to repay) is an intentional strategy or a debt agenda of International Financial Institutions to create and promote conditions of dependency of developing countries on the developed countries as conditions attached to loans are harsh because rather than bringing human beings out of poverty, they have worsened poverty as will be shown in detail later in this chapter.



Indeed, SAPs have had devastating effects on the socio-economic development of Zambia. As Alexander and Mbali (2004:140) point out: “The social consequences of structural adjustment programmes have been evident in Africa for two decades.” Up to this day, the effects of SAPs are still prevalent. SAPs have ensured an increase in the proportion of Zambians living in poverty. 68 percent of the Zambian population fell below the national poverty line in 2004 (Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2006:2). Alexander and Mbali (2004:408) observe: “The imposition of SAPs beginning in the 1980s ensured an increase in the proportion of Africans living in absolute poverty. Through a neoliberal lens, these programmes posited development by means of export-led growth and reduced national spending”. Reduced expenditure on public education led to a decline in school enrolments (This will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter on the ‘Origins and growth of NGOs’). As Abdi and Ellis (2007:289) argue,

Indeed, actions of the World Bank and its affiliated regional development banks, the IMF and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) contribute through their fiscal, loan, and aid policies to the decline of especially Zambia’s socioeconomic development.

SAPs have negatively impacted on the education sector in Zambia. Like many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Zambia entered the 1990s (the period of the full implementation of SAPs) with a major crisis in its provision of Basic Education due

to reduced funding (Ministry of Education, 2007). As result, INGOs and National NGOs in Zambia have increasingly become involved in the provision of education.

However, although INGOs and national NGOs are indeed key partners in the government's attempts to implement education policy in Zambia, there are often countervailing forces at work to limit their efficacy. Such forces are frequently economically - driven and more often than not the result of World Bank and IMF directives. These forces as Watson (undated) argues include: economic, in the shape of globalisation and the role of Trans National Corporations and Multilateral Agencies; political, in respect of the conditionalities for aid laid down by the donor agencies and with regard to the relief of the debt problem; and ideological if one considers where the pressures for educational reform originate. Scholars such as Ilon (1996) have argued that the World Bank has shifted from supporting education for productive purposes towards support for 'educational policies aimed at maintaining economic, political, social, health and environmental stability'. 'Such a Shift' she argues 'reflects the emerging needs of a growing global economy for relatively stable environments' (Ilon, 1996: 413). Basically, the argument is that it is much easier for Trans National Corporations and businesses to invest in countries where there is social and political stability and that it is easier for the World Bank to work together with individual governments in developing their social, welfare and educational programmes on a partnership basis (Watson, undated). Therefore, much of the World Bank's educational policy at the Basic education, institutional and family education levels should be viewed as a form of global welfare (Watson, undated). Most governments are being encouraged by International Organisations such as UNESCO

and the World Bank to work in partnership with NGOs in the provision of education (UNESCO, 2010; World Bank, 1990).

Indeed, in this era of globalisation and marketisation, with growing budget cuts in the provision of basic services, for example, education by both North and South governments, the need to work with partners such as NGOs to share the financial burdens becomes indispensable. However, Sorj (2005) draws our attention to the fact that in many parts of Africa NGOs depend on foreign funding. He argues that due to their dependency on foreign resources local NGOs' agendas tend to adapt to foreign donor priorities and so-called international NGOs' agenda, acting many times as sub-contracted services.

Actually, as NGOs seek for funding for their projects/programmes they tend to move away from community needs and closer to the neo-liberal interventions preferred by many donors (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). This is because of conditions attached to donor funding which tend to compel many NGOs to follow donor agendas. In this regard, NGOs may be seen as part of a continuum between the state and the market, rather than as a radical alternative to them (Sorj, 2005). These issues will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter as I consider the origins and growth of NGOs; NGOs and the State as well as NGOs and Donors. This will provide an understanding of the role of NGOs in society, particularly, their work in the education sector.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Non-Governmental Organisations and their Development Activities**

#### **3.0. Introduction**

In the previous chapter it was noted that at the Jomtien Conference in 1990 national governments of both developed and developing countries including Zambia renewed their commitment to working with NGOs in the provision of education. This chapter provides an understanding of the various roles and functions of NGOs, drawing examples from countries in the Global South, particularly from Africa and Asia. NGOs have been seen as offering a ‘comparative advantage’ to development programming as they have traditionally been able to deliver ‘added value’ that other agents could not or do not (Bek, Binns and Nel, 2004). NGOs tend to be better positioned to reach the poor, at least relative to the organisations which often fund them. As Riddell notes:

As official aid is, at least initially, provided on a government to government basis, it is not easy for a donor to target its aid directly to specific groups of poor people (or to poor individuals), though some have certainly managed to do so for a proportion of aid disbursed. One preferred and increasing popular way of reaching the poor is through Non-Governmental Organisations- supporting their projects and programmes (Riddell, 1999:320).

Thus, many international organisations such as UNESCO suggest that co-operation and partnership between NGOs and national governments is one of the most critical requirements for successful provision of EFA by 2015 (see UNESCO, 2009; 2010).

In this chapter, the discussion begins by exploring the definition of NGOs. This is followed by an outline of origins of NGOs, their history and the growth of NGOs in Africa. This is provided in order to help us to understand not only why NGOs exist, but also their value to the development and poverty reduction agenda. The last two sections of this chapter examine NGO-State relations and NGO and Donor relations. In this way, one hopes to provide a thorough understanding of the roles and activities of NGOs.

### **3.1. What are NGOs?**

The term “Non-governmental Organisation” was created by the United Nations in 1945 (Willets, 2002). Willets (2002) points out that at the United Nations nearly all types of private bodies can be recognised as NGOs as long as they are independent from government control, not seeking to challenge governments either as a political party or by a narrow focus on human rights, non-profit making and non-criminal.

The World Bank defines NGOs as:

Private organisations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development. They are value-based organisations which depend, in whole or in part, on charitable donations and voluntary service, and in which principles of altruism and voluntarism remain key defining characteristics (World Bank, 2009: online).

Turner and Hulme (1997:200) define NGOs as “associations formed from civil society bringing together individuals who share some common purpose.” Hulme (2001:130) describes NGOs as “peopled organisations (that are both not part of the state structures, are not primarily motivated by commercial considerations or profit maximisation, are largely self-governing, and rely on voluntary contributions (of finance, labour or materials) to a significant degree.” NGOs are commonly understood to be voluntary, not-for-profit organisations, independent of government and business (Michael, 2004). In this thesis, I refer to NGOs as organisations that are voluntary,

independent of government, non-profit making, and service oriented for the benefit of members of society especially those at the grassroots level.

### **3.2. Classification of NGOs**

NGOs can be categorised in different ways. Frits Wills (1995) has classified NGOs based on their size; David Korten (1987) and has devised criteria for categorising NGOs by their activities such as charitable relief organisations (providing relief services with little participation of the beneficiaries) and service organisations with local community involvement; and still other authors have classified NGOs by their origins, sectoral focus or funding sources (see Carroll, 1992; Farrington and Bebbington, 1993)

Moreover, Shaeffer (1994) observes that more precise classifications of NGOs include: (i) agencies primarily concerned with relief and welfare activities; (ii) agencies encouraging small-scale, self-reliant local development projects and processes; (iii) agencies more directly involved with community empowerment and social transformation; (iii) the large, umbrella, 'policy advocacy' NGO, in some ways a sector in itself, which forms networks or federations and develops distinct social, political and economic functions and influence within the policy making processes of a country; (iv) the 'service provider' organisation which sees its role more in terms of supporting, protecting, linking and developing the capacity of a myriad of action-oriented but often weak and relatively powerless grassroots NGOs. In this thesis, the most important distinction is between NGOs of different geographic origins: particularly between NGOs from the Global North (International NGOs) and NGOs from the Global South (Local or National NGOs). International NGOs operate outside

their country of origin, which is often in the developed world and usually work in more than one developing country. Local or National NGOs have their origins in the country in which they work and are normally staffed locally (for this study National NGOs are those which originate from developing countries and operate there).

### **3.3. Origins of NGOs**

The International NGO movement has its origins in missionary movements that date, in some cases, to the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Fox, 1987; Suzuki, 1998; Smillie, 1999). The modern secular NGO movement in Europe and North America have engaged in socio-economic development activities such as disaster, relief and education. The modern secular NGO movement begun with the creation of the Red Cross in the 1860s (Smillie, 1999). Like the Red Cross, a good number of today's best known NGOs spring out of war such as the Save the Children in 1920, Foster Parents Plan during the Spanish War (1936-1939), and Oxfam and CARE - grew from the Second World War (Smillie, 1995).

The post-war reconstruction effort "in earnest in Europe with the implementation of the Marshall Plan in 1948" made suffering and starvation no longer an imminent threat in Europe (Manji and O'Coill, 2002: 573). When the reconstruction period in Europe ended, many of these NGOs had to redefine their objectives and justify their existence. In their course of action they shifted geographically to the developing countries, and in addition to their immediate concerns with relief and welfare, extended their activities into the sector of development and politics (Ndegwa, 1996,



Cleary, 1997). Oxfam, Plan International and Save the Children were among organisations that decided to extend their existing humanitarian activities beyond Europe's boundaries (Manji and O'Coill, 2002).

Below I will show why NGOs exist in Africa as I explain and discuss the history and growth of NGOs in Africa.

### **3.4. History and Growth of NGOs in Africa**

From time immemorial, Africa has been characterised by organised collective action which explains the continent's receptivity to NGO approaches in the present day. Bratton (1989:570) explains:

In pre-colonial times, political organisation was integrated within a social network of kinship obligations based on the extended family. Individuals were expected to share food, labor and productive assets with relatives and had a right to expect livelihood support from others in return. While chiefs were able to compel commoners to till their fields – that is, by calling upon the authority of the traditional state- the most typical form of organisation was voluntary and reciprocal exchange among equals.

Bratton (1989) reminds us that during the colonial era, NGOs, in the form of churches and missionary societies, were the main providers of health and education services, especially in rural areas while the state stood aloof from rural development and focused on the regulatory functions of law and order. He explains that it was only towards the end of colonial rule that the state assumed responsibility for development services. He also observes that Africa's first modern NGOs sprang up during the colonial period, in the form of ethnic welfare groups, professional associations, separatist churches which articulated the demands of newly-modernised Africans. Such NGOs which were sparked by aspirations for social, economic and political emancipation formed the building blocks of national political parties which led to the end of colonial rule in Africa.

However, it was the period following the Second World War and in the postcolonial period that witnessed mass popular mobilisations and formation of numerous popular organisations (both formal and informal) throughout Africa (Bratton, 1989; Manji and O'Coill, 2002). Over the past few decades, NGOs have become increasingly visible and work in various sectors of social life, including education. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, both developed and developing countries witnessed steady increases of NGOs. In the OECD countries of the Global North the number had grown from, "1,600 in 1980 to 2,970 in 1993" (Edwards and Hulme, 1995:3), while in the South countries such as Bolivia, the number of NGOs increased from "100 in 1980 to 530 in 1992" (Arellano-Lopez and Petras, 1994:562) and in Kenya, the number of international NGOs working in that country went up almost three-fold to 134 organisations during the period 1978 to 1988 (Osodo and Matsvai, 1998: 8). Due to the increase in numbers, influence and importance of NGOs the 1980s have been

termed by some observers the “NGO decade” for rural development in Africa (Fowler, 1988; Bratton, 1989). Even then, growth has continued to be recorded in most parts of Africa. In Kenya, for instance, the NGO sector experienced its biggest growth between 1996 and 2003, from 511 registered NGOs in 1996 to 2,511 (a fivefold increase) in 2003 (World Resources Institute, 2005:4). In Ghana, in 1960 there were only ten registered NGOs, while by 1991 it was estimated that over 350, excluding numerous village level associations were operating (Kamara and Denkabe, 1993:187). In Zimbabwe, there were 642 registered NGOs in 1992 (Smillie, 1995:62). Henriot (1997) observes that in Zambia there has been the growth and vitality of NGOs since the 1990s. From the 1980s to date, there are in most developing countries, a number of NGOs undertaking various development activities, with the stated aim of alleviating poverty and empowering the local communities for them to manage and sustain their own development process.

The prominence of NGOs is not by chance; nor is it only a response to local initiative and voluntary action. Equally important is the fact that NGOs have increasingly gained popularity with official aid agencies in this era of neo-liberalism in most parts of the world. Therefore, the prominence of NGOs stems from two main factors: the retreat of centralised government and the keen interest of donor agencies in the era of neo-liberalism. The gradual retreat of the state particularly in the developing world in public service delivery has left a ‘gap’ that NGOs attempt to fill. From after the Second War to the late 1970s, the role of government was primarily to run the public sector, oversee the economy, and treat its citizens as consumers (Kajimbwa, 2006:59). In development discourse, especially in Africa, the dominant approach during this period was top-down, state-controlled, and supply driven (Chambers, 2005; Lewis,

2005). However, as noted in chapter 2 conditionalities attached to loans by multilateral agencies such as the IMF and World Bank called upon African governments who had borrowed to decentralise their powers to the lower levels and to reduce on government spending. These conditionalities were packaged in the neo-liberal policy of SAPs.

It was seen in chapter 2 that the neo-liberal approaches that dominated the discussion of development policy since the 1980s advocated for Structural Adjustment Policies such as reduced government spending and reduced deficits, and liberalisation of the market. For example, in Zambia, SAPs led to the reduction in government spending in the education sector. As noted in the previous chapter in Zambia and many other parts of Africa the SAPs have had adverse effects on the education system and society as whole. Indeed, at present, most commentators agree that the neo-liberal reforms the IMF and the World Bank imposed under SAPs in the 1980s actually caused much of the growth in poverty and inequality we have seen in Africa and Latin America over the past few decades (Manji, and O’Coill, 2002). As Mwansa writes: “All in all, the experience of SAP throughout Africa has been disastrous. The magnitude of the human tragedy caused by SAP may not be easily understood to-day” (Mwansa, 1995:67).

Several studies have linked SAPs to deteriorating education conditions in Africa. As Jauch, Makwavarara, Moodley, Gentle, and Hattingh (2007:96) point out:

Zimbabwe and Zambia are often cited as dramatic cases of the markedly

detrimental effect of SAPs on the postcolonial successes of education access and quality in Southern Africa. Zimbabwe overcame significant barriers after gaining independence in 1980 but these achievements were significantly reversed under the auspices of SAPs.

In Zambia as Kelly (1999) notes, the effects of SAPs on education included: a decline in primary school gross enrollment ratio (from 95% in 1985 to 85% in 1994); smaller proportion of those entering Grade 1 completing Grade 7 (79% in 1988-94 compared with 102% in 1982-88); negative impact on equity: drop in girls' participation, especially in rural areas as the poor could not afford fees at various levels; public disillusion because of poor employment prospects for school leavers and others; made worse by civil service retrenchment and closure/collapse of industries; education considered as not worth the investment if it does not lead to paid employment which led to poor participation in schools; and much brain drain as qualified individuals, especially teachers and academics, sought better prospects outside the country (Kelly, 1999:350).

However, such negative effects of SAPs forced the multilateral and bilateral aid agencies to rethink their approach to development initiatives, in particular, how to present the same neo-liberal economic and social programmes with a more "human face". The result was to co-opt NGOs and other civil society organisations to a repackaged programme of welfare provision, a social initiative that could be more accurately described as programme of social control (Manji, and O'Coill, 2002). As

Gary (1996) notes that the rapid growth in the NGO sector in Africa parallels the era of structural adjustment. "...the burgeoning NGO sector fits perfectly into the thinking of anti-statist structural adjustment driven by free market ideology" (Gary, 1996: 149). Gary (1996) further reminds us that the international economic orthodoxy promoted by the World Bank and the IMF, and the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programmes has resulted in increasing withdrawal of the state from the economic sphere, and a de-emphasis of state-led development strategies with the World Bank view being that the state should only provide a 'sound macro-economic and legal framework' for investment (World Bank, 1991, 1994). The reduction in state provision of public services such as education and health has led to the growth of NGOs to fill the 'service delivery gap'. In development circles, there is consensus that 'bottom-up' NGOs have a comparative advantage over bloated and inefficient government ministries in terms of implementing development projects and delivering aid and are somehow 'closer to the grassroots'(Gary, 1996; Bek, Binns and Nel, 2004).

In addition, the growth of NGOs in the 1980s in Africa lay in the global ascendancy of neoliberalism (Mkandawire, 2004; Hearn, 2007; Thomas, 2008). As Manji and O'Coill (2002) reminds us:

This was the period that saw the emergence of 'neo-liberalism' as  
the dominant political-economic ideology in the West...

Central to this ideology was the concept of the minimalist state, a  
concept the realisation of which radically altered the landscape of

development practice in Africa and throughout the post-colonial world (Manji and O’Coill, 2002:9).

In recent years, and especially after since the end of the Cold War in 1989, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies have pursued a “New Policy Agenda” which gives renewed prominence to the roles of NGOs (Robinson, 1993). This agenda is not monolithic as its details differ from one official aid agency to another, but in all cases, it is driven by two sets of beliefs organised around the two poles of neo-liberal economics and liberal democratic theory (Moore, 1993). Firstly, under the New Policy Agenda – a neo-liberal agenda- as Colclough and Manor (1991) note markets and private initiatives are viewed as the most efficient mechanisms for achieving economic growth and providing most services to people. Governments should provide enabling environment for private provision but should reduce their direct role in the economy; because of their supposed cost effectiveness in reaching the poorest, official aid agencies support NGOs in providing welfare services to those who cannot be reached through markets (Fowler 1988; Meyer 1992; Smillie and Helmich, 1999). NGOs have always provided welfare services to the poor in countries especially in Africa where governments lacked the resources to ensure universal coverage in health and education sectors but the difference is that now they are viewed as the preferred channel for service provision. As Edwards and Hulme (1996:6) write: “In the New Policy Agenda NGOs are seen as a preferred channel for social welfare and this is a fundamental change”. In fact, international aid agencies expect NGOs to act as a substitute for state welfare programmes, a solution to welfare deficiencies at a time

when Structural Adjustment Programmes have largely increased the extent of welfare needs.

Secondly, NGOs are regarded as vehicles for 'democratisation' and essential components of a thriving 'civil society', which in turn are viewed as vital to the success of the agenda's economic dimension (Moore, 1993). Hearn (1998:90) writes:

On the political side, the desire of western donor agencies to promote 'democratization' among the recipients of aid has placed NGOs in a central position as components of 'civil society'. They are seen to promote pluralism and act as a counterweight to state power (Hearn, 1998:90).

By their very presence NGOs are said to 'pluralise the institutional environment and, to the extent that they encourage participation in decision-making, to promote a democratic political culture' (Bratton, 1989:570). NGOs are seen as fostering democracy through the enlargement of pluralism and empowerment of poor people by allowing them to fully participate in development decision-making and policy making, and in the process forcing open the African state. NGOs are seen as playing a vital role in protecting human rights, opening up channels of communication and participation (Kasfir, 1998).

NGOs are said to be an important force as they have a comparative advantage over official aid agencies and government in reducing poverty in a country. In order to better understand how or why NGOs especially International NGOs have gained this



comparative advantage over donor agencies, it is useful to examine NGO and donor response to poverty reduction strategies. David Korten (1980), in his examination of the professionalised civil society of the 1970s found considerable flaws in how donor organisations sought to implement programmes. He found that the main issue for many donor organisations centred around their own inability to design solutions for the poor. Korten, (1980:481) notes,

Projects currently in vogue present[ed] difficult problems which  
remain[ed] to be solved and their solution [was] inhibited by  
programming procedures better suited to large capital development  
projects than to people-centred development.

Korten, (1980) argues that donor agencies simply do not have the systemic organisational capacity to directly target the people they seek to assist. As a consequence, they began to search for solutions outside their own institutions. As shown in Table 6 below, Korten argues that donor agencies are not organisations that are conducive to working with the poor. This is because of the restrictive, bureaucratic limitations which hinder them to effectively reach the poor. Hence, NGOs are considered to be able to reach the poor more effectively than donors.

**Table 6:** Contradictions in Foreign Assistance Programming

<b>Poverty-focused rural development involves projects which are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small</li><li>• Administrative and personnel-intensive</li><li>• Difficult to monitor and inspect</li><li>• Slow to implement</li><li>• Not suitable for complex techniques of project appraisal</li></ul>	<b>Donors remain impelled to prefer projects which are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large</li><li>• Capital- and import-intensive</li><li>• Easy to monitor and inspect</li><li>• Quick to implement</li><li>• Suitable for social cost-benefit analysis</li></ul>
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**Source:** Korten, (1980:484)

As noted previously NGOs are said to have a comparative advantage over government in a country's development. This is because NGOs contribute to institutional pluralism and democracy complementing government and private agencies (Brett, 1993). The drive to establish liberal democracy in Africa after the 1980s was prompted by western governments trying to change the authoritarian nature of many states in Africa and the decay of political institutions and processes since political independence in the 1960s (Ibeanu, 1998, Abrahamsen, 2000). As Matanga (2010:115) points out:

Whereas at independence, most African states were multi-party systems, within less than a decade, virtually all had lapsed into being either one-party or no - party political systems through a combination of

constitutional manipulation and naked force.

For example, Zambia at independence in 1964 was a multi-party state but by 1972 it became a one-party state. Many African political leaders justified the establishment of a one-party state as they assumed that African societies were basically classless and homogeneous and that unlike Western societies which were divided along class lines, did not warrant a plural political system based on social classes (Mboya, 1986). As a result, centralisation of power in the presidency and the executive at the expense of other institutions was a common feature in many African states. As Matanga (2010:116) notes: “Extensive bureaucratization of the state became the norm, justified under an all-encompassing Africanization policy”. This enlarged bureaucracy proved inefficient as the state failed to perform even the minimal of development tasks”.

Due to the decline in democratic prospects in Africa, donors demanded for political reforms which were embedded in ‘political conditionality’. Robinson (1994) notes that political conditionality has involved the suspension of foreign aid pending to the installation and institutionalisation of ‘good governance’, human rights and plural party politics.

In Zambia, the failure of the neo-liberal interventions to economic growth and corresponding growth in poverty led to the greater recognition of NGOs as key stakeholders and relevant actors in the education sector, and national development as a whole. The Government of the Republic of Zambia through the Ministry of Education in its national education policy writes: “ An overall objective of national

policy in education is to establish new and revitalized partnerships, involving all providers of education and all levels: partnerships between the Ministry of Education and other government ministries, partnerships between the Government and non-governmental organizations...” (Ministry of Education, 1996:134). Thus, NGOs are supposed to work in partnership with the government in educational provision. This is to ensure that adequate education and of good quality is provided to every child of school-going age.

Having examined the historical growth of NGOs and alluded to their relevance for the development of African societies, I now turn to the roles and functions of NGOs in the next section. This is vital because the rationale of this thesis is to draw attention to the role and importance of INGOs and NGOs in education policy production and implementation in Zambia. As key stakeholders in the provision of education, NGOs are considered to provide hope for satisfying immediate educational needs of the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

### 3.5. NGO Roles and Functions

NGOs seek to serve community needs such as education, health, water and sanitation.

Stromquist (2002) observes that NGOs perform at least three main functions: (i) service delivery (for example, relief, welfare, and basic skills); (ii) educational provision (for example, basic skills and usually critical analysis of social environments); (iii) public policy advocacy (for example, lobbying for international assistance for specific purposes and monitoring or promoting relevant state policies).

Practical examples of NGO roles and functions will be helpful here. It was noted in the previous chapter that NGOs in Africa particularly in Mali, Ethiopia and Malawi INGOs and national NGOs have played a role in influencing national education policy process. In Mali, NGOs were the driving force of the campaign to change policies regarding community schools whereby the government was persuaded to integrate community schools into the formal education system (Miller-Grandvaux, *et al*, 2002). In Ethiopia and Malawi, NGOs have attempted to influence changes in the school curriculum (Miller-Grandvaux, *et al*, 2002). NGOs have also helped the government with the implementation of education policies especially in increasing access to education. Rose (2007) draws our attention to NGO education programmes in Ethiopia, Guinea, Mali and Malawi. She explains that some types of NGO-supported community schools exist in all four countries, usually with donor funding. In Zambia, NGOs such as Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCs) is providing education especially to orphans and other vulnerable children in community schools (Nkosha and Mwanza, 2009). In all these African countries, NGOs are involved in social mobilisation or sensitisation programmes to encourage demand for schooling, an

activity often beyond the current scope of government activities (Miller-Grandvaux, et al, 2002). In a country such as Bangladesh, there is a relatively long history of indigenous NGO service delivery, with Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), a large NGO, providing non-formal education (alternative service delivery) from 1985 (Chabbott, 2006:4). “BRAC began working in education in 1985 with 22 experimental one-room schools and 726 students and grew to some 34,000 schools by 1999. From 1999 to 2004, the number of BRAC schools increased from 34,000 to 35,500 as enrolment stabilised at just over 1 million students, making BRAC easily one of the largest complementary education models in the world, according to EQUIP 2 findings” (Chabbott,2006:4). Smillie (1995) notes due to BRAC’s success, in 1994 two of its staff were deputed to UNICEF in Kenya to help with planning, and the Government of Vietnam engaged BRAC to examine the feasibility of replicating some of its work there. Smillie (1995) observes that many Southern NGOs have become large, in some cases larger than their Northern partners, and some have managed to combine altruism with advocacy and policy reform. He gives an example of AWARE in India, which was reaching over 2000 villages, and had considerable impact during the 1980s on state government thinking about land tenure for tribal and scheduled castes. In Sri Lanka, he explains, Sarvodaya, covering a third of the country’s villages, was one of the few national institutions, including government that was able to function in all parts of the country during the civil war. In Zambia, the different roles played by NGOs in the policy-making process and implementation of EFA goals in Basic Education will be seen in greater detail in chapter 5 in which I present the findings from this study.

In the development co-operation NGOs are used in various different ways, to fulfil a number of separate functions. At times, they are used as go-betweens to channel funds from donor governments and countries to local individuals, groups, or organisations working in the recipient countries, and at times, they are used as local or international operators through which developmental activities are launched and undertaken even at the grassroots level (Malkia and Hossain, 1998). Many governments in developed and developing countries have come to recognise NGOs as partners in development and to depend on them for the execution of some projects, instead of depending on governmental agencies or private profit agencies. In Zambia, it will be noted in subsequent chapters that the government recognises NGOs as stakeholders in education provision. This is important because, as we have seen, governments alone are unable to produce and implement education policy to ensure the achievement of equity, access and quality goals.

NGOs especially national NGOs often work with the community at the grassroots levels. Thomas (2008) draws our attention to Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development, who made a speech to the 1999 Birmingham NGO conference. Thomas (2008:98) notes: “In her speech, Clare Short says that ‘it is important that southern NGOs do not confine themselves to service delivery or advocacy on behalf of the poor’ (they should move beyond that to ‘enable the poor to make their own demands’).” However, it must be noted that not all NGOs give opportunities to poorer sections of society or the marginalised to be involved in decision-making. Some scholars such as Bebbington and Farrington (1993) and Ilon (2002) have urged caution by pointing out that NGOs come in different forms and while there may be many achievements associated with them these do not restrain

them from precluding their members and clients from participating in their own decision-making processes.

NGOs tend to have greater access to communities, and to have staff that is more committed, experienced, and sensitive to local needs, thereby allowing them to function as better intermediaries than government agencies (Stromquist, 2002). This does not happen by chance but is rather as a result of their need to perform well in order to attract donor funding from donors and to please the communities they serve. Mwansa (1995) points out in successful experiences, the NGOs' contribution has been shown by the extent to which they have empowered the disadvantaged at personal, group or community levels. He explains that NGOs have helped disadvantaged people to break out of helpless situations so as to effectively control their own developmental efforts and ultimately their own destiny. He also observes that on certain occasions, NGOs have provided services for which the needs persist even beyond the public services or have developed programmes to meet emerging needs not yet within the scope of the public service. Indeed, this is especially true when many states in Africa are either beset by unsolved, protracted and devastating internal conflicts, or under the yoke of the SAPs. As noted previously SAPs in Africa, and in other parts of the developing world, have been the one solution to the developing world's economic problems prescribed by the IMF and World Bank. However, the effects of SAPs on human life in Africa have been devastating as discussed in the previous chapter. Against this backdrop, the role of NGOs in helping the poor, disadvantaged or marginalised groups of the population assumes even greater importance and significance.



### **3.6. Importance of NGOs**

One of the main reasons for the increasing use of NGOs in developmental activities is to find an alternative and better channel for development aid in developing countries (Malkia and Hossain, 1998). As noted earlier, the period from after the Second World War to early 1990s, the dominant approach exercised by many governments in Africa was the centralised system of government was top-down and state-controlled. This proved inefficient as most governments in Africa were unable to provide high-quality services to citizens (Kajimbwa, 2006). In order to bypass the bureaucratic state structure of most of the developing countries, the Western donors turned to NGOs. While public sector activities continued to be heavily criticised by donor agencies for having contributed much to the problematic situation in many developing countries, NGOs were receiving much credit and gaining a greater status in development work (Malkia and Hossain, 1998). NGOs have gained popularity with donor agencies as they are believed to have fewer overhead costs, and to depend less on bureaucratic procedures, and to be less subject to political constraints (Anheier, 1990; Matanga, 2010).

In his analysis of literature Anheier (1990) observes that there are four basic arguments in favour of the comparative advantage of NGOs in developing countries. These are the social, economic, political and cultural arguments: (i) the social argument consists of the idea that NGOs try to stimulate the participation of the poor and are able to reach those groups of marginalised and disadvantaged third world societies which are often bypassed by public service delivery systems. The social argument attaches greater equity to private voluntary efforts than to the public sector

(Anheier, 1990). Due to insufficient public funds combined with cultural and social access problems, poor and disadvantaged groups of the population are difficult to reach by conventional service systems - a problem which is intensified by elite influences on government decision-making (Anheier, 1990). Hence, NGOs are in a better position to reach the poor and disadvantaged populations; (ii) the economic argument suggests that NGOs are capable of carrying out services more economically than governments (Anheier, 1990). Anheier (1990)'s analysis of literature revealed that since NGOs are non-profit making, they are not seeking profits out of their actions, they often aim at self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Just like the social argument refers to equity, the economic argument refers to greater efficiency of NGOs. The view that NGOs are efficient is held mostly by donor agencies which had guaranteed NGOs' credibility to the donors (Edwards and Hulme, 1998; Matanga, 2010).

In addition, the economic argument claims that failures with NGO-led projects (as compared to failures with government led ones) have much less impact on the economy as a whole because most NGO-led development projects are designed and implemented at micro-level while governments are usually working at the macro-level (Anheier, 1990); (iii) the political argument claims that NGOs are relatively immune from changing political tides, while government policies and agencies are subject to unexpected change (Anheier, 1990). Malkia and Hossain(1998) observe that an extension of the political argument refers to the 'hidden agenda' and ultimately political motivation of official development assistance if we regard aid as a political tool in global politics. They explain that by using NGOs as local and international operators the problems with hidden agenda can be better dealt with as NGOs are

generally believed to be more 'honest' and less guided by political considerations. However, one might argue that NGOs are losing this 'honesty' virtue and some have lost it completely by their dependence on international aid; (iv) the cultural argument suggests that NGOs, embedded in the local culture, are more sensitive to local needs and articulation (Anheier, 1990). Anheier (1990) argues that instead of replacing indigenous social structures by large scale organisations, NGOs attempt to nurture local organisations within their own cultural context.

In addition, it is believed that NGO-led projects are innovative, participatory, flexible, better directed, and more reflective of the needs of the poor in developing countries (Malkia and Hossain, 1998). Based on the literature, the most common strengths of NGOs are believed to be as follows: responding quickly to situations, especially in emergency circumstances; mobilisers of local resources through community participation; being committed to shared values with the ethic of voluntarism and non-profit; being innovative and flexible in problem-solving; being cost-effective (low cost) in delivery of services; operating in areas where governments are unable to work; being promoters of human rights and equality; being committed to long-term involvement; and reaching the poor and disadvantaged population (Myllyla, 1998; Miller-Grandvaux, *et al*, 2002).

One might argue that case by case some of the arguments stipulated above may be true but some might be untrue. Generally, NGOs are seen as helping alleviate poverty through the facilitation of local capacity among the grassroots communities, and the strengthening of democracy especially in authoritarian and totalitarian states.

However, alongside these successes, have been questions about NGO autonomy, democracy consolidation and organisational effectiveness (Agg, 2006; Rahman, 2006; Ilon, 2008; Klees, 2008). Since most NGOs in Africa depend on International aid agencies for funding (Amutabi, 2006) one might ask whether NGOs in Zambia can effectively influence national education policies without the interference of aid agencies. One may also ask whether NGOs' voices would be heard at all by the Zambian government.

Additionally, despite the presence of NGOs in Zambia, not all children have access to education. Zambia, Ministry of Education (2003:22) points out :

The situation is even more critical for grades 8-9. The enrolment rates for grades 8-9 are approximately 190,000 of which girls represent 46 % of the total". In 2003, only half of the pupils who left grade 7 were able to find school places in grade 8, while just over one-fourth who left grade 9 proceeded to Grade 10.

Whatever the case, the role of NGOs in developmental activities especially in the education sector is necessary. NGOs have become indispensable in many countries in the developing World especially after the implementation of SAPs and as it was seen in the previous chapter these SAPs have caused growing mass poverty and the declining human welfare. It was noted in the previous section that NGOs have on certain occasions provided services to meet the needs of the poor and disadvantage which were not met by governments. As Mwansa (1995:65) argues, "NGO activities in Africa cannot simply be dismissed as inconsequential or irrelevant. At times, in

Africa, and I believe elsewhere in the developing world, the absence of their activities simply means no social development for the people.” As Makoba (2002) adds:

The absence of viable states or markets in most Third World countries including African states has left NGOs as the most important alternative for promoting economic development. Thus, the failure or inability of both states and markets to meet the basic needs of the majority of people in the Third World has given rise to the growing importance of the NGO sector in the development process (Makoba , 2002:59).

Therefore, one may suggest that the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy formulation and implementation in Zambia might enhance the achievement of various development-driven education goals such as Education for All by 2015. This thesis focuses on understanding and evaluating the role of NGOs in Basic Education with reference to policy reform in Zambia. In this regard, the interactions of NGOs with government policy-makers are essential in the execution of their roles in the education sector. Thus, the next section examines the relationship between NGOs and the State.

### **3.7. NGOs and the State**

NGOs became prominent in many countries in Africa during the period of international indebtedness and shrinking government budgets. African states were going through a decline in economy from the mid-1970s. For example, in Zambia the crisis in the economy from the mid-1970s was caused by declining copper prices on the International market coupled with a rise in world oil prices (Lungwangwa, 1999). It was noted in the previous chapter that the economy of Zambia was adversely affected as it depended on copper as its major export and main foreign earner. As a result, the government was unable to provide sufficient basic services to its citizenry.

The solution to Africa's problems, it was perceived were to be found by pursuing the neo-liberal model of free market capitalism. As Matanga (2010) notes:

The African state it was argued, was at the centre of the problem, resulting from excessive intervention in the economy at the expense of market forces, leading to the latter not being able to facilitate efficient resource allocation (Matanga, 2010:116).

The solution, it was asserted, was to roll back the state in favour of the more efficient, rational and profit-motivated market (Edwards and Hulme, 1996; Abrahamsen, 2000).

The SAPs introduced by the IMF and the World Bank (as discussed in the previous section) in most states in Africa were part of the efforts to roll back the state and expand market forces. As Manji and O’Coill (2002) observes:

The indebtedness of African nations gave multilateral lending agencies the leverage they needed to impose their neo-liberal policy prescriptions, in the spirit of universality, across the board. The Bretton Woods institutions (with the support of the bilateral aid agencies) became the new commanders of post-colonial economies. Through the myriad structural adjustment programmes they initiated throughout the continent they could determine both the goals of development and means for achieving them. Adjustment legitimised their direct intervention in political decision-making processes (Manji and O’Coill , 2002:10).

To roll back the state also called for pluralism in the political arena in Africa. Manji and O’Coill (2002:11) points out: “So in the 1990s, the focus of attention of the international community was placed upon ‘good governance’, persuading African governments to permit political pluralism in the form of ‘multipartyism’. Zambia, for example, became a one-party state in 1991. The call for multipartism in Africa was part of the good governance agenda embedded in a neo-liberal theoretical perspective.

The good governance agenda was accompanied by the bilaterals and multilaterals setting aside significant volumes of funds aimed at ‘mitigating’ the ‘social dimensions of adjustment’ (Manji and O’Coill, 2002). “Funds were made available to ensure that a so-called ‘safety net’ of social services would be provided for the ‘vulnerable’-but this time not by the state (which had after all been forced to ‘retrench’ away from the social sector) but the ever-willing NGO sector” (Manji and O’Coill, 2002:11).

According to Hearn (2007:1096), “At the end of the 1990s, NGOs in Africa managed nearly US \$ 3.5 billion in external aid, compared to less than US \$ 1 billion in 1990”. The scale of official funding to NGOs has increased over the few decades. From 1970 to 1999, NGO aid to developing countries rose from US \$ 3.6 billion to US \$ 12.4 billion yearly, equivalent to 21.6 percent of total development assistance from members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (see Table 7 below).



**Table 7:** NGO and official aid to Developing Countries

(constant 1990 \$ bn)

	1976	1980	1988	1999
Total NGO aid to Developing Countries	3.6	5.2	6.9	12.4
Private donations	3.5	3.6	4.5	10.7
Official grants	0.1	1.6	2.4	1.7
OECD official aid	29.5	42.1	51.4	46.6
NGO aid as % of OECD aid	11.0	11.4	12.3	21.6

**Source:** Clark, 2003:130

Due to the availability of such funds, the involvement of Northern NGOs in Africa grew dramatically. For example, as stated earlier, in Kenya, number of Northern NGOs working in that country went up almost three-fold to 134 organisations during the period 1978 to 1988 (Osodo and Matsvai, 1998: 8).

While I am cautious of generalisations, there is ingrained suspicion between Governments and NGOs in developing countries. Due to declining levels of development assistance to governments, many governments of developing countries are increasingly suspicious of NGOs and their activities, suspecting that donors were increasingly perceiving them to be alternatives to governments themselves (Cleary, 1997). Governments often view NGOs as ‘being unprofessional, do-gooding, poorly organised, non-comprehending gaggles of usually undisciplined, if well-meaning civilians’ (Mahabir, 1992:81). Shaeffer (1994) adds that they perceive them as eager

to encourage division and sow discord between the people and government agencies, expose government weaknesses, and confuse people concerning government aims. On the other hand, NGOs often regard government officials and bureaucracies as inefficient, cautious and slow, with a limited capacity for intellectual and technical inputs, more interested in personal gain than social welfare, dominated by corruption, biased toward support to the elites and civil servants, and ignorant of real problems of the people (Pinney, 1983; Clark, 1992). As Shaeffer (1994) adds: “And they believe that more and more frequent legislation and regulation concerning NGOs in the developing world may cripple rather than support their activities. The result of all these factors can be jealousy, the inability or unwillingness to seek compromise or clarify respective responsibilities, the taking of refuge in technical approaches by government and in ideological rhetoric by NGOs, and the superficial implementation of participation in very limited levels of the system” (Shaeffer, 1994:198).

In his writings on NGOs and the State, Clark argues that NGOs can ‘oppose the state, complement it, but they cannot ignore it’ (Clark, 1991:75). Indeed, there is need for negotiation of some kind of relationship. Smillie (1995) draws our attention to the relationship between NGOs and Southern governments. He explains that the climate for NGOs can be influenced by government in a number of formal and informal ways. He points out that on the informal side, governments can promote what has become known as an ‘enabling environment’ through collaboration, consultation assistance in co-ordination, and by sending positive messages to the media and to the public that NGOs have a beneficial and welcome role to play in development. On the formal side, Ian Smillie (1995) explains that the legal, regulatory and fiscal framework in which NGOs function plays a large part in their evolution or otherwise. He points out “Are

registration and reporting requirements clear and simple? What tax and import concessions are provided? Are regulations applied in a fair and consistent manner? Is there a right of appeal?" Smillie (1995:74).

Bratton (1989) gives us a helpful model for analysing the government-NGO relationships. He sees the key issue between government and NGO as 'the political tension between the government's urge for order and control and the NGO quest for organizational autonomy'. He asserts that the amount of space granted to any NGO activity is determined 'first and foremost by political considerations', especially concerns of national sovereignty and regime stability and less by economic and social considerations. He acknowledges that donors are 'increasingly enamoured of NGOs and maintains that governments will view shifts in donors' funding tendencies in political rather than economic terms. Although it might seem cost-efficient to allow NGOs to 'relieve government of some of the burdens of service delivery', governments would still prefer control of foreign aid, and may worry that 'NGOs are accountable to, and may act as proxies for foreign interests' (Bratton, 1989:576). Moreover, he gives an example of African governments who insist on the sovereign political right to act as gatekeepers between organisations within their borders and foreign agencies. He explains further that governments can use administrative mechanisms of control to oversee the activities of the voluntary sector, including monitoring of NGOs, co-ordination of their activities, co-optation of their work or dissolution. NGOs, in turn, assert autonomy through counter-strategies such as maintain a low profile, selective collaboration with government or policy advocacy (Bratton, 1989).

The study by Michael (2004) in Zimbabwe revealed that Government-NGO relationship is characterised by tension and cooperation. For example, she points out that the Government of Zimbabwe regularly issued stinging condemnations of NGOs and civil society organisations, particularly over their support of political pluralism. She found that the state-owned media had been a major facilitator of Government's campaign against NGO activity publishing front-page exposes on allegations of NGO corruption. Michael (2004) also found that Government-NGO relations in Zimbabwe were made all the more interesting when relationships between local levels of government were included in the equation. Even in the face of overt fight with national government for political space, she reports, Zimbabwean NGOs often develop strong positive relationships with government at the local or ministerial level.

Indeed, NGO-state relations are important. NGOs tend to have complex relationships with the state. They may complement, supplement, cooperate, surrogate, provide parallel services or pressure the state to change their services (Meyer, 1992; Silova, 2008). Silova and Steiner-Khamisi (2008) showed that NGOs in Armenia in the Caucasus region complement government by initiating, designing, and implementing a pilot project on the assumption that the project will be scaled up by government. For example, it was found that several national foundations of the Soros Network in Armenia attempted to counter SAP reforms by building local capacity and enhancing civic participation. Silova and Steiner-Khamisi (2008) study revealed that while governments and development banks narrowly define the decentralisation of finance as the ultimate goal, thereby reducing the role of the community to simply paying fees and generating additional income for under-funded schools, national foundations have supported community participation, community schools, community newsletters, and

a series of other projects that emphasise the other aspect of decentralisation, namely, civic participation. They found that the goal of national foundations was to ensure more transparency and more social accountability of governments. NGOs may supplement government services or cooperate with government in areas that comply with the NGO's own mission. This is because NGOs can be an effective conduit for meeting local needs as well as for local voices to be heard and have an influence on the policy development process. Therefore, this thesis provides information on the role of NGOs in policy reform in Basic Education in Zambia. Indeed, not only is the relationship between NGOs and government important in the role of NGOs in education policy but also the relationship between NGOs and donors. This is explained in greater detail in the next section as I examine NGO-donor relations.

### **3.8. NGOs and Donors**

NGOs and donors usually work together in developmental activities including education. NGOs have gained popularity with International aid agencies and therefore many NGOs in both developed and developing countries are funded by these aid agencies. This is because NGOs are regarded by many official agencies as more efficient and cost effective service providers than governments, giving better value-for-money, especially in reaching the poor (Brodhead, 1987; Meyer, 1992; Sollis, 1992; Vivian, 1994). In addition, NGOs are often described as more flexible, more democratic, less hierarchical, closer to grassroots beneficiaries and with a greater understanding of local needs and indigenous technologies (Agg, 2006). NGOs are largely viewed as the “favoured child” of the financial institutions and something of a panacea for the problems of development as beginning from the late twentieth century (Edwards and Hulme; 2002, Matanga, 2010). Vivian (1994) argues that official agencies and the supporters of Northern NGOs often view NGOs as a ‘magic bullet’ which can be fired off in any direction and though, often without much evidence will still find its target. As a result, much development aid is channelled through NGOs as will be shown below.

Global data on NGOs is scanty. Writing for the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Catherine Agg (2006) looked at trends in aid to NGOs using Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development data, she admits the unreliability of the OECD as a source because OECD categories do not incorporate all NGO funding. However, the trends are clear. Table 8 below shows the percentage of Official Development Aid (ODA) given to NGOs from 1984 to 2003.

**Table 8:** Proportion of Official Development Aid channelled through NGOs,

1984-2003

Year	ODA to NGOs (%)
1984	0.2%
1991	2.3%
1998	4.7%
2003	5.9%

**Derived from Agg (2006: 17), figure 10**

In 1984, 0.2% which is less than one percent of ODA was given directly to NGOs. By 2003, the figure had grown to six percent which translates into substantial amount of money as shown in Table 9 below.

**Table 9:** Official Development Aid to NGOs (in million US dollars), 1984-2003

Year	Millions of US dollars ODA to NGOs
1984	0.8m
1991	900.0m
1998	1,100.0m
2003	2,200.0m

**Derived from Agg (2006: 23), figure 16**

One wonders how NGOs are performing in an environment in which they are increasingly funded through international aid. In her journal article, 'The Growing Market for NGO influence', Ilon (2008:17) argues, 'Increasing NGO funding has meant increasing integration into a global economic and political spectrum, though this is often an uncomfortable fit'. And Sustainability in its report on 'The 21<sup>st</sup> Century NGO: In the Market for Change' writes, 'We are seeing a fundamental shift in the landscape over which NGOs operate with market influence emerging as a key feature' (Sustainability, 2003:49). Several authors point out that the need to integrate NGOs into a global ODA scenario has caused many NGOs to focus on global integration and legitimacy rather than to meet the local needs of communities effectively (Agg, 2006; Dolhinow, 2005; Klees, 2008).

Indeed, NGOs are operating in a challenging global environment. Ilon (2008) notes that NGOs are often required to act as policy agents of donor organisations; as NGOs increasingly vie for development monies, the international fund-seeking environment becomes more competitive; and this competitive environment has meant competition between NGOs whereby some NGOs' energies are siphoned off into competitive actions such as highlighting competitors' weaknesses and downfalls.

NGOs' dependence on international aid agencies give rise to important questions concerning NGO-State relations, and the ability of NGOs to act independently in pursuing their goals. Edwards and Hulme (1998) note that official funding does the following: (i) encourages NGOs to become providers of social and economic services on a much larger scale thitherto, even though their long-term comparative advantage



in this field is doubtful; (ii) compromises the performance of NGOs in other areas of development activity such as institutional development and advocacy; (iii) weakens the legitimacy of NGOs as independent actors in society; and (iv) distorts the accountability of NGOs away from the grassroots and internal constituencies, and overemphasises short-term, quantitative outputs. As a result, NGOs' activities are often influenced by donors' preferences such as poverty alleviation and teacher training. This is because the majority of NGOs especially in developing countries mainly depend on donor funding to carry out their activities. As Suzuki states:

NGOs cannot ignore donors' interests whether or not they agree with them, for funding is one of the most important requisites for NGOs to maintain themselves and implement projects. In fact, because donors are not only funding sources but are also key targets of development education to advocate to the public in general NGOs have considerable investment in maintaining donors' interest and maintaining good working relationships with them (Suzuki, 1998: 111).

When donors' interests do not seem to disturb the activities of NGOs, NGOs are willing to work to accommodate those interests. But at times donors' preferences seem to disturb NGO activities especially when they are required to pursue market oriented goals which encourage inequalities. Ilon (2008) expresses concern as to whether NGOs can provide alternative development in a market-based system of global economics. She observes that NGO influence is growing. However, the

occasionally uncomfortable relationship of NGOs with bilateral and global donors continues to grow in size and influence. She argues that though donor rationale for increasing this assistance remains unclear, there is some evidence that it increases most when a country has a high percentage of the population living in poverty. NGOs often face pressure when they move away from meeting the local needs. 'No longer wholly linked to local community needs, they must negotiate viability within a global context that pits them against other local NGOs and agendas of local governments. While they receive their legitimacy from local arenas, they must nevertheless assure that the agendas of global development partners are attended to, even while they lack the informational linkages that would put them on a more equal footing' (Ilon, 2008:19).

NGOs find themselves vulnerable to the demands of international aid agencies because of their need to secure International funding. Ilon (2002) explains that NGOs are vulnerable to outside influences due to the need for market share and visibility. She gives an example of an NGO that begins with empowering local women through literacy classes, may unwittingly turn its energies toward maximising external donor support. She argues that the NGO might also change its initial foci and methods rather than fall into disfavour of major funders. She explains the NGO may have focused its initial energy on empowering local women- literacy being a primary means of empowerment. An outside funder, for example the World Bank, however, is focused on stabilising and creating markets as their founding goal (Ilon, 2002). Ilon (2002) goes on to explain that literacy is one means of stabilising the very poor and moving individuals from subsistence economies to market-based economies. Literacy has a place in both the NGO agenda and the agenda of the World Bank (Ilon, 2002). In this

context, it is easy for an NGO to take on the agenda of the outside funder by making seemingly small compromises in service delivery or process (Ilon, 2002). Thus, while they may share a means, in this case, female literacy, their goals differ, and often NGOs' goals are subordinated (Ilon, 2002). NGOs' interests are often compromised due to dependence on external donor support. Dependence on an outside funder puts NGOs in a dilemma, for the NGO becomes little more than a particularly efficient and legitimising means of delivering market focused goals (Hearn, 1998).

It is important to mention that some NGOs do not accept foreign aid. According to Theunis (1992) in the Southern countries, there are those NGOs who, aware of the dangers of promoting new relations of dependency, radically reject all financial support international donor agencies. He explains that their aim of self-sufficiency includes the financial aspects of development and they are very wary of the imposition of external sources. Though it must be mentioned that such NGOs who do not accept financial support for donor aid agencies are very few. Theunis (1992) explains that some NGOs mushroom, in response to market conditions: supply begets demand. He points out that such NGOs, are usually not based on the grassroots, and are wholly dependent on donors. As a result, NGOs are at risk of carrying out the agenda of donors because of dependence on donor funding. "And northern NGOs that receive support from their own governments run the risk of becoming agents (or being seen as agents) of political or strategic, rather than humanitarian objectives" (Smillie, 1995:61). Theunis (1992:9) puts it, 'the gift ties the giver to the recipient and vice versa'.

Essentially NGOs must meet the needs of the local community. Nevertheless, some of them have found themselves carrying out economic programmes of donors and lending agencies. As Butler puts it: "...NGOs find themselves accepting official donations with firm conditions attached to their use. These strings can be a major handicap, hampering managers' ability to prioritize tasks" (Butler, 1996:28). Makumbe puts it this way: "The local NGOs' dependence on foreign donors forces them to adjust their political, social and civil agendas to suit those of their benefactors. In the end, they lose their initial identity and become mere extensions of the foreign donor agencies. Consequently, they may lose local support and falter in their civic thrust as they are bound to improve the living standards of their members and of society at large" (Makumbe, 1998:315). An NGO that takes on market-oriented goals does not provide an alternative development service and might not provide a higher quality service (Ilon, 2002). One might argue that NGOs cannot effectively voice the needs of local communities in a global market and worse still where they depend on international aid. Ilon (2008:20) notes,

...a changing environment has meant that the powerful NGOs are increasingly linked and constrained by global forces-especially those imposed by market forces. Their ability to be the voice of global social movements has increased but, at the same time, they do so by weakening their links to local communities. They do not have the transnational resources or links to compete on the ground as traditional development actors. Neither can all but the smallest devote themselves entirely to voicing

the needs of the poorest communities.

In their analysis of the contemporary role of NGOs, Edwards and Hulme (2002) point out that the increasing availability of official funding for NGOs, access they are offered to centres of national and international decision-making, represent both an opportunity and a danger. They argue that NGOs can scale-up their operations using official funds and use the New Policy Agenda to make their voices heard more loudly and more frequently through lobbying and advocacy; at the same time, by becoming more dependent on governments, especially NGOs are at risk being co-opted into the agendas of others and seeing their independent social base eroded. The question still remains as to whether NGOs can contribute to educational developments without the influence of multilateral and bilateral development agencies whose goals are mainly market focused.

Indeed, foreign aid comes with its own problems. Riddell (2007) draws our attention to aid that as the Cold War was drawing to an end, aid levels experienced their sharpest and most prolonged period of contraction in four decades. He explains, however, that towards the end of the 1990s, aid levels bottomed out and then slowly began to rise again. He points out that foreign aid is in the midst of another phase of revival. According to Riddell (2007:386-387) the five fundamental problems with the current system of aid are: (i) aid is still not provided in sufficient overall quantities to meet the different needs of poor countries; (ii) the aid which is provided is not allocated in any systematic, rational, or efficient way to those who need it most; (iii) the aggregate amounts of aid provided to recipient countries are volatile and

unpredictable; (iv) scores, and, at the extreme, hundreds of development aid relationships are still dominated by recipients having to interact with scores, and at the extreme, hundreds of different official donors and donor agencies, and many thousands of individual projects and programmes; (iv) While donors regularly articulate the centrality of recipient ownership and partnership between donors and recipients as critical for aid to have a positive impact, in practice, the overall aid relationship remains extremely lopsided with donors remaining almost wholly in control.

In his article, *Aid, Development, and Education*, Klees (2010) gives two accounts about foreign aid: firstly, he points out that foreign aid does not “work” to reduce world poverty, no matter whether one takes a neo-Marxist or liberal approach to understanding it. He argues that foreign aid is more about self-interest and geopolitics than anything else - at best it is a form of compensatory legitimization practiced by the world’s richest governments to put a band-aid on inequality. Secondly, Klees (2010) mentions that aid is not ‘all bad’. According to Klees (2010) aid has a progressive and transformative component. He recommends that more money should be provided directly to the poor; there must be focus on key priorities; the role of research in the aid regime must be changed; and forms of democratisation and collective agenda setting must be increased. However, foreign aid in this era of neo-liberalism has contributed to inequalities in many developing and developed countries. As Klees (2002:50) argues: “Maintaining poverty and inequality is an integral part of the new and old policy agenda of capitalism.” As seen in the previous chapter, this is done through the neo-liberal agenda whose policies such as SAPs sustain poverty, inequality and marginalisation. The UNDP Human Development Report (2005) states

that only nine countries (4 percent of the world's population) have reduced the wealth gap between rich and poor, whilst 80 % of the world's population have recorded an increase in wealth inequality. The report continues,

The world's richest 500 individuals have a combined income greater than that of the poorest 416 million. Beyond these extremes, the 2.5 billion people living on less than \$2 a day—40% of the world's population—account for 5% of global income. The richest 10%, almost all of whom live in high-income countries, account for 54% (UNDP, 2005:4).

In 2010, the UNDP Human development Report observed that, 'Nearly 7 billion people now inhabit the earth. Some live in extreme poverty—others in gracious luxury' (UNDP, 2010: 35). The report states that

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest incidence of multidimensional poverty. The level ranges from a low of 3 percent in South Africa to a massive 93 percent in Niger; the average share of deprivations ranges from about 45 percent (in Gabon, Lesotho and Swaziland) to 69 percent (in Niger) (UNDP, 2010: 21).

Indeed, one might ask why Zambia is beset with a number of educational problems and challenges in Basic Education in spite of the presence of International as well as National NGOs in the country. One may argue that NGOs seem ineffective because they lack autonomy due to their dependence on international aid. In Zambia, for example, “free” primary education policy from grades 1-7 was pronounced in 2002 (Ministry of Education, 2002). Sikwibele (2003) notes that in Zambia the free education policy was designed to bring back to school all the children who dropped out and all those who previously had no access to education, especially the orphans and vulnerable children and other children in difficult circumstances. However, as Sikwibele (2003) goes on to observe, many orphans and vulnerable children are still out of school or attending community schools. One wonders why stakeholders of education such as NGOs are failing to ensure that all children of school going age enter school and complete a full cycle of good quality Basic Education. Sikwibele (2003) further alludes to the fact that despite the pronouncement of the free education policy in Zambia, not many expansions have been made in classroom infrastructure and in the number of teachers, and only a very minimal increase in school requisites. It appears there is lack of progress by NGOs in addressing issues of access to Basic Education and the quality of education in Zambia. Therefore, it may be suggested that NGOs need to up-scale their aims and activities in order to contribute effectively to the achievement of EFA goals. In this regard, this study considers the following main question: *‘Does the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform enhance the achievement of EFA in Lusaka province of Zambia?’*

In summary, this chapter has considered NGOs and their roles and functions particularly in the field of education. The two main roles and functions of NGOs-



service delivery (for example, relief, welfare, and educational provision), and public policy advocacy (for example, monitoring or fostering relevant state policies) were discussed in detail. It is noted that although NGOs attempt to serve community needs such as education, there are usually countervailing forces at work to limit their efficacy due to their dependence on foreign aid, which often comes with many strings attached. Indeed, such forces are frequently economically driven embedded in the neo-liberal agenda and more often than not the result of IMF and World Bank directives. It was noted in the previous chapter that neo-liberal policy preferences all favour the supremacy of markets over social welfare and private over public provision. Many scholars have argued that markets in education have worsened inequalities (see Hill, 2003; Apple, 2004; Kumar and Hill, 2009).

Yet there remains some uncertainty about whether the participation of NGOs in education policy, particularly in Zambia, can enhance the achievement of EFA without the influence of their foreign funders who many seem to embrace neo-liberal prescriptions. There is a need for more attention to NGOs' efforts and intentions in education policy-making and implementation, and this challenge will be taken up in the next chapter. It will draw upon the theoretical resources developed in this chapter to formulate an appropriate methodology for empirically investigating the role of NGOs in Basic Education reform in Lusaka province.

## Chapter 4

### METHODOLOGY

#### 4.0. Introduction

NGOs are stakeholders in education provision in Zambia, although their role is not clearly outlined in education policy documents. Ng'oma (2008: ii) notes:

Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) appear to wear two coats. In the eyes of their defenders, they are the “magic bullet” that makes the difference between life and death in the lives of the less privileged members of society. However, in the eyes of their critics, they are simply “psychic prisons” of self-willed individuals whose exact role in society is, at best, yet to be understood.

In this study, my aim was to explore the role of NGOs in the education sector, particularly, their role in educational policy-making and implementation in Basic education in Lusaka province of Zambia.

The previous chapter presented information about the origins and growth of NGOs. It was suggested that rather than contributing to sustainable poverty reduction, NGOs in most cases appeared to have contributed to sustaining poverty knowingly or unwittingly because of the desire to carry out a neo-liberal agenda. It was argued in chapter 3 that a by-product of a neo-liberal approach to education policy-making is not to diminish poverty and inequality, this being due to its emphasis on global

markets which encourage competition. As noted in chapter 2 there are many educational problems in developing countries which hinder some children from accessing education. Yet these are the countries that have NGOs working in the education sector with a focus on disadvantaged children. Before giving details of my findings of the fieldwork in the next chapter (chapter 5), I outline my main research question: Does the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform enhance the achievement of EFA in Lusaka province of Zambia? In light of this key concern, this chapter discusses the methodological implications of the framing of this thesis in understanding the role of NGOs in education policy-making and the implementation of policy in Lusaka province, Zambia.

This chapter is divided into two parts-Part A and Part B. First the research aim and research questions guiding this study are presented. Next, it describes the research framework that guided this investigation into the role of NGOs in education policy-making and the implementation of policy. Finally, the role of the researcher is considered.

The second part of this chapter then discusses the case study approach located within a qualitative approach to research which has helped to shape the enquiry. The research methodology and methods used, and ethical considerations are also discussed.

## **Part A**

### **4.1. Research Aim**

The study investigated the role of NGOs in shaping and influencing education policy reform in Basic Education in Lusaka province of Zambia. To reaffirm, this project sets out to explore: In what ways, does the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform enhance the achievement of EFA in Lusaka province?

### **4.2. Research Questions**

- Who are the major local and global players i.e. stakeholders in education policy making and implementation in Zambia?
- What role are NGOs playing in education policy with regards to Basic Education?
- What motivates NGOs to be education policy advocates?
- How do the different stakeholders such as local communities, teachers, headteachers and government officials perceive NGOs and their role in education policy in Basic Education?

### **4.3. The Research Paradigm**

The Research Paradigm is defined as a “basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:99). Similarly, Lincoln and Guba (1985: 105) define paradigm as ‘the basic beliefs or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontological and epistemological fundamental ways’. Paradigms are important in guiding the conduct of research. This is because they define the world-view of the researcher (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). According to Guba and Lincoln (1994) a research paradigm consists of ontology, epistemology and method. In this study, the research paradigm will comprise ontology, epistemology, theoretical perspective, research design and specific methods employed in the research process.

Ontology is about the nature and form of social reality (Corbetta, 2003). It is concerned with the existence of things and of the external world. Usher (1996:11) notes that ontology is concerned with ‘what exists, what is the nature of the world, what is reality’. Epistemology is about ‘what distinguishes different kinds of knowledge claims- specifically with what the criteria are that allow distinctions between ‘knowledge’ and ‘non-knowledge’ to be made’ (Usher, 1996:11). Epistemology provides the basis on what should be considered as acceptable knowledge in a discipline. In other words, it provides the basis on which knowledge claims might be justified. Ontology and epistemology shape our theoretical perspective and in turn methodology and method. Methodology is concerned with how we gain knowledge about the world (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:99). Methods are tools for collecting data (Denscombe, 2010; Silverman, 2010) and in this study, within a qualitative case study approach, the following instruments were used in collecting

data: Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, participant observations and documents.

Social Science research seems to be dominated by two often opposing paradigms-positivism and interpretivism. There are broad divisions between positivist approaches and interpretivist approaches, between realists and relativists, between those favouring quantitative data and those advocating the use of qualitative data (Denscombe, 2002; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). Additionally, there are other research paradigms such as constructivism (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003), and post-modernism (Usher, 1996). Some of the interpretive stances used in qualitative research include postmodernism, feminist research and critical theory (Creswell, 2007). However, this thesis has adopted the Critical Theory approach. Critical theorists believe that reality is constructed not by nature but by people (Sarantakos, 1998). While positivists see reality as everything that can be perceived through the senses; reality is ‘out there’ (Sarantakos, 1998:36). However, the position taken in this thesis is that the world is not an experiment in which humans behave in predictable ways like chemical reactions with cause and effect.

Critical Theory shares the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the paradigm of interpretivism. The paradigm of interpretivism assumes that reality does not exist in an objective and neutral form. Social reality is something that is constructed and interpreted by people – rather than something that exists objectively “out there” waiting to be observed (Denscombe, 2002). They believe that social phenomena can only be understood through the subjective interpretation of the

knower. Hence reality is not objective but subjective and relies on context and on the interaction of actors through giving meanings to events. Thus, there are no general laws and governing theories but there is stress on the contextual understanding of the social world. Researchers following the interpretivist paradigm are interested in understanding a particular situation or context rather than the discovery of universal laws (Esterberg, 2002; Guba and Lincoln, 1994), though this does not imply that interpretive research is always bound to a particular context or incident. Additionally, researchers following the interpretivist paradigm are not expected to be detached from what is being observed, that is, as earlier pointed out 'no detachment between the observer and what is observed' (Corbetta , 2003:28).

Critical Theory is concerned with subjective feelings and insights but within a framework of broader structural conditions that shape the situation and power relationships (Esterberg, 2002; Swann and Pratt, 2003). It is interested in examining social conditions in order to reveal hidden structures. Critical Theory is particularly concerned with revealing the ideologies- 'the sets of beliefs emanating from powerful groups in society, designed to protect the interests of the dominant' (Cohen, *et al*, 2007:31). As Kincheloe and McLaren put it:

A critical social theory is concerned in particular with issues of power and justice and ways that the economy; matters of race, class, and gender; ideologies; discourses; education; religion and other social institutions; and cultural dynamics interact to reconstruct a social system (Kincheloe and McLaren , 2002:90).

Critical Theory is of importance for this research as it informs this study the power relations among NGOs, government and donors. I explain and discuss this issue in greater detail in chapters 5, 7, and 8, however, it is suffice to mention here that there are power differentials among these three actors: NGOs, government and donors based on possession of resources. It is hoped that NGOs are involved more in the policy formulation process despite the scarcity of resources among the majority of NGOs.

Moreover, Critical Theory seeks to point out problems prevailing in society, and seeks human emancipation, that is, to free human beings from circumstances that enslave or dominate them. Critical theorists are of the view that research should empower those individuals who are powerless in society and change existing social inequalities and injustices. As Usher (1996) writes that emancipatory in Critical Theory involves the unmasking of ideologies that maintain the status quo by restricting access of groups to the means of gaining knowledge and the raising of consciousness or awareness about the material conditions that oppress or restrict them. This fits in well with my research on Non-governmental Organisations' participation in basic education delivery with reference to education policy reform in Zambia as it is hoped to empower individuals particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged children who seem to be powerless in society to change existing social inequalities and injustices by means of providing them with information (i.e., knowledge and understanding intended to free them from injustice). I anticipate engaging with policy-makers and stakeholders in the education sector including parents as I disseminate my research findings.



This thesis provides evidence to policy-makers and stakeholders in the education sector with the hope to bring about positive changes in Basic education in order to cater for every child who needs education. Additionally, since this thesis provides an understanding of the ways in which some children do not have access to education and some receive poor quality education, it is hoped that children, their parents and other stakeholders in the education sector will take action to change those situations that restrict children from accessing education and of poor quality.

#### **4.4. Ontological Issues**

The Critical Theory approach is located in relation to the ontological position of constructionism. “Constructionism is an ontological position which asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors” (Bryman and Bell, 2007:23). This implies that reality is socially constructed through social interaction (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Robson, 2002). Unlike, positivists who believe that one reality exists and that it is the researcher’s task to discover what it is, constructivist researchers hold that there are multiple realities which are unknown. Constructivist researchers such as Robson (2002:27) note, seek ‘to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge’. Therefore, in this study, I used multiple data collection methods such as interviews and participant observation to enable me to acquire multiple perspectives. “The research participants are viewed as helping to construct the ‘reality’ with the researchers” (Robson, 2002:27).

#### **4.5. The Role of the Researcher**

In taking a Critical Theory approach, and in recognising that the social world - of the Zambian experience- is socially created, I am aware of the importance of locating the researcher in the process of knowledge production. What I bring to the study are my prior qualifications and experience as a secondary school teacher (from 2000-2003) and as an academic for six years in the Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies at the University of Zambia. As a child growing up in Zambia, I had an uncritical notion of NGOs. As I have been growing up, particularly during my work as an academic and as a learner pursuing this PhD I began to ask critical questions about NGOs, for example, 'Whose interests are NGOs serving?' and 'Who funds the work of NGOs?' Therefore, when dealing with educational issues I draw on the experiences of working as an educator. I also bring to this study an insider's way of asking critical questions. This is informed by my prior experience, be that experience of growing up in a middle-class residential area in Africa (this has helped to shape my thinking in a critical way because of the privilege of acquiring a better education), three years of volunteer work with vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, or the experience of research work at Masters level qualification and another three as an academic.

Having grown up in Zambia I have come to understand my African environment well and I am sensitive to the subtleties, assumptions and prejudices that may form part of the story of NGO involvement in education. Thus, conducting my research in Zambia was significant as I understood my social location well. As Brock-Utne (1996:607) points out: "The African researcher knows his/her environment better than any

expatriate and will more likely ask the right questions provided that she/he is allowed to ask them...” Although, I was familiar with my research context, I do not think this compromised my data collection as I took on the role of a research student suggesting questioning and exploring of issues rather than the expert coming in to criticise. I was determined to be open as much as possible. I put aside my assumptions and entered the scene with an open interest in learning. I need to mention here that reflexivity is vital in qualitative research. My reflections as a researcher in the study were crucial. Holloway and Wheeler (2010:220) point out,

Human beings are self-reflective persons who are based in everyday life.

Their personal relationships and experience happen in a temporal and historical context and depend on their position in the world.

Preconceptions and provisional knowledge are always revised in the light of experience and reflection. The text is always open to multiple interpretations because researchers or reflective persons are involved in their own relations with the world and others.

Therefore, I made sure that reflexivity was applied by laying aside my preconceptions at every stage of this study, at the planning stage, during fieldwork and after the field research in order to ensure that my ‘enthusiasms’ were checked. In this regard, both the advantages and limitations of the role of NGOs in basic education policy reform were investigated as a way of managing my own subjectivities i.e. I was open to both positive and negative stories with regard to NGOs.

Since I am fluent in a number of indigenous languages in Zambia, I was able to converse in Nyanja with the local communities as it is the main language used in Lusaka province of Zambia which was my location of study. I was able to put participants at ease and engage with them in their own language. Hence, my experience, skills, expertise, and willingness to grow professionally throughout the process of conducting research and during data analysis were significant for the success of this study.

Still another advantage of conducting research in Zambia is the peace and stability prevailing in this state. Peace and stability in many states signal new opportunities for landmark studies in areas where the routine consultancy reports still dominate in the form of ‘country reviews’ rather than in original, empirical research in such contexts (Jansen, 2005). Country reviews are mainly prepared for the donors by recipient governments. For example, in Zambia, the ‘2002 Review and Analysis of Zambia’s Education Sector Final report’ was prepared by a few individuals contracted as consultants by the Zambian government. The Country Review was prepared for the United States Agency for International Development in order to secure funding. Policy-makers view country reviews as a way of sourcing for support, for the education sector in this case. However, mostly policy initiatives are donor oriented. Thus, it could be argued, pleasing the donors at the expense of the real needs of the local people.

## **Part B**

### **4.6. CASE STUDY RESEARCH**

In this study I used an instrumental case study research approach. Case Study draws on multiple data collection methods in order to understand the complexity of the case and frequently looks for multiple perspectives. Accordingly, interviews, focus group discussions, participant observations and document analysis formed the data collection approaches and multiple perspectives on the role of NGOs in the education sector in Zambia. In the following pages, I intend to give a definition of a case study, build my case of Lusaka province in Zambia and discuss the advantages and limitations of the case study method.

#### **4.6.1. What then is a case study?**

Stake (1995: ix) says: “A case study is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances”. According to Creswell (2007) a case study involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context). So a case study is a detailed and thorough investigation of a particular situation or of a few cases rather than a sweeping statistical survey.

A case can be an individual or a group or an institution or a community. This study will be conducted in Lusaka province of Zambia. Lusaka province is the ‘case’ in this study (explained in detail in the next section).

There are different types of case studies. Stake (1998) identifies case studies as: the intrinsic case study, the collective case study, and the instrumental case study. This study is an instrumental case study of Lusaka province. It is an instrumental case study, and not an intrinsic case study, in that it is not attempting to capture the case in its entirety but instead is concerned with an aspect of the case: the larger issue of perceptions of the role of NGOs in Basic Education policy-making and implementation in Lusaka province. Stake (1995) defines an instrumental case study as one in which the issue is the primary concern and the case itself is not a priority. He states that “The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of else” Stake (1998:88).

#### 4.6.2. Rationale for Case Study

The rationale for designing and carrying out a case study are as follows: first, my epistemological stance and research questions required detailed understanding of organisational processes and individuals’ constructions of interactions and engagements with NGOs, I was required to obtain a wealth of detail about my research area. I concentrated more on research questions about ‘how’ and ‘why’ rather than ‘what’ or ‘how much’ and thus focused on a broader explanation of operational links and relationships. Finally, it encouraged me to use multiple sources of data through interviews, Focus Group Discussions, participant observations and document analysis (Denscombe, 2010). This was to enable me to best address my research questions and to triangulate the data and thus improve ‘validity’ (Stake, 1995). Later in this section, I will reflect on issues of quality and trustworthiness in relation to my case study.

#### 4.6.3. Rationale for Site Selection and Context

As in all qualitative studies, the setting and circumstances that surround and determine meaning of the phenomena need to be addressed (Miles and Huberman, 1994). It is important to discuss in some detail the reason for selecting Lusaka province as my case (the site of the study).

The fact that Lusaka province was a familiar, convenient, and accessible site for my case study was not enough to make it a significant setting for this study. There were other contextual elements that provide a particular/distinctive profile. These include: a high number of NGOs, geographical characteristics, policy centre- policy making and development have a particularly high profile in Lusaka, and a community demographic profile that reflected the ethnicity in the nation. These will be explained in detail below.

#### 4.6.4. Number of NGOs

Lusaka province is an appropriate case study site for this research because it has a large number of NGOs. Though, I was not given the number of NGOs in Lusaka province by the Registrar of Societies during my fieldwork (because of lack of records as the computer had crashed and unfortunately it did not have a hard copy) preliminary observations indicated that the majority of NGOs in Zambia are located in Lusaka district. Manion (2006) notes that the majority of CSOs/NGOs in Zambia are urban-based. Geloo (2004) indicates that there were about 600 registered NGOs in Zambia in 2006. According to the Registrar of Societies the total number of NGOs in

Zambia was 15,360 as at 31 December, 2010 (Field notes, 2011). Unfortunately, the Registrar of Societies was unable to give me the total number of NGOs working in the education sector as the officer in-charge said that information has been lost due to a technical fault on the computer. In 2003, Lexow reported that there were approximately 120 NGOs that were active in the education sector in Zambia (Lexow, 2003:16). According to Lexow (2003) these organisations tend to focus on broader community welfare issues, adult education, gender training, human rights and various strategies for training in skills and income generation.

#### 4.6.5. Geographical Characteristics

Lusaka province consists of both rural and urban areas. It is divided into four districts: Kafue, Chongwe, Luangwa and Lusaka. Chongwe and Luangwa are mainly rural. The provincial capital of Lusaka province is Lusaka, which is also the capital city of Zambia. The fact that Lusaka province contains Lusaka which has the capital city status made it an appropriate site as it is the seat of government. It accommodates legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. It also accommodates the Ministry of Education national headquarters where government education policy-makers are found and a high number of NGOs. In this way, it enabled me to see the interactions between government and NGOs easily. For example, I was in attendance at a workshop where a Civil Society Organisation (an umbrella organisation for NGOs) invited the deputy Minister of Education. This organisation was reviewing its 2010 activities and planning for 2011. The deputy Minister of Education gave an opening speech at that workshop and NGO officers drew the Minister's attention to their concerns in education such as teacher absenteeism in most schools in Zambia.



Lusaka is not only a centre of government but is also a commercial centre. It is the economic, cultural and transportation centre of the country. Lusaka is centrally located, which gives it strategic importance, because it is easily accessible from all parts of the country. The four major highways of Zambia head north, south, east and west from it. Lusaka plays a significant role in the manufacturing industry. Most manufacturing industries/enterprises are located in Lusaka. Food processing enterprises like milling, meat processing and production of essential products such as detergents appear to be concentrated in Lusaka.

Lusaka is the centre of national educational establishments and therefore plays an important role in the education of the Zambian population. One of the three public universities in Zambia, the University of Zambia is located in Lusaka. Lusaka city also has about 95 recognised lower basic, middle basic, upper basic, and secondary schools (UN Habitat, 2007:13). Additionally, Lusaka has a number of community schools which serve the vulnerable and disadvantaged children. NGOs provide support to schools including community schools in such forms as direct ownership of schools, adoption of existing schools, and support for disadvantaged children (Ministry of Education, 1996).

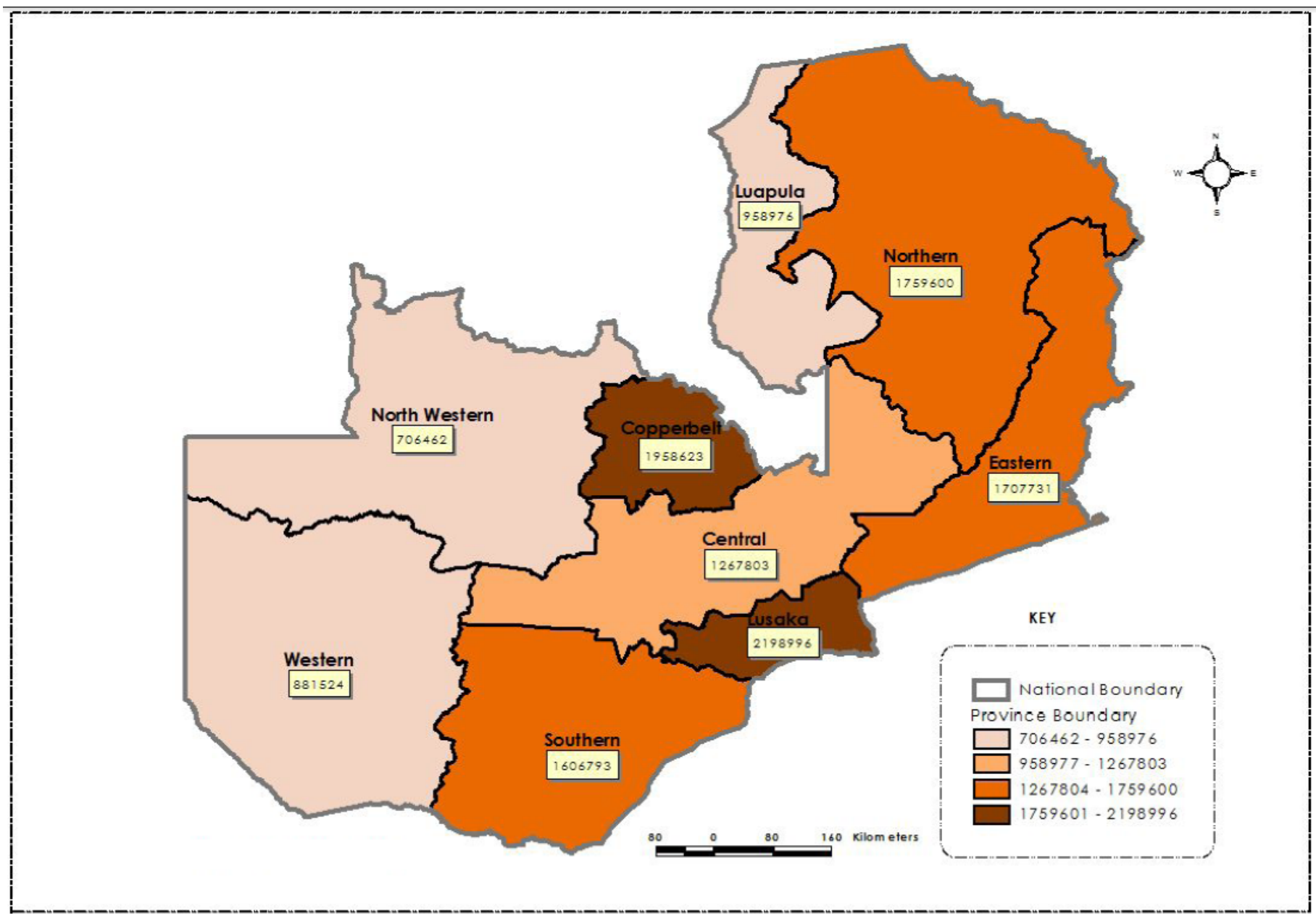
The population of Lusaka province consists of diverse people. It comprises people from all ethnic groups found in Zambia, 73 tribal groups, as well as a reasonable proportion of people of European and Asian origin. The population of Lusaka province is growing at a fast rate. As the Central Statistical Office (2011:6) notes:

The Population for Lusaka Province increased from 1,391,329 in 2000 to 2,198,996 in 2010. This means that the annual average population growth rate for the province was 4.7 percent in the 2000-2010 inter-censal period.

The growth rate increased from 3.4 percent in the 1990-2000 inter-censal period.

The map below shows the population of Zambia by province.

Map 3: Population Distribution by Province, Zambia



Source: Central Statistical Office (Republic of Zambia) (2011:2)

From the above map, the population of Lusaka province is higher than that of other provinces in Zambia. Actually, this made Lusaka province an appropriate site for this study as it will be explained deeply in the next chapter.

#### 4.6.6. Selection of NGOs

A sample of 6 NGOs was drawn from the population using purposive sampling and 2 NGOs using snowball sampling procedures. Table 10 below includes 8 NGOs (the first 8 NGOs in the table) that were covered in this study. Table 10 shows some NGOs and their educational activities in Zambia. In order to maintain anonymity, pseudonyms instead of real names of NGOs have been used. This was a decision that was taken between the author and certain NGOs that organisational names and/or personal names would not be used in this thesis.

**Table 10:** Educational NGO Activities

	Name	Focus and Scope
1	Sona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Campaigning and advocacy. Works with local and national NGOs to campaign and advocate for policy changes and increased accountability of service providers.</li><li>• Supports vulnerable children in community schools. Works through a national NGO which supports community schools.</li></ul>
2	Shaba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empowers rural communities by providing them with non-formal education. It promotes literacy in rural communities especially among women and children.</li></ul>
3	Lala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports children's rights in schools. It focuses on child protection and participation.</li></ul>
4	Tona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocates for policies and programmes that support the education of girls and women.</li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocates for the removal of cultural practices that impinge on female education.</li> <li>• Supports the disadvantaged and vulnerable students by paying school fees for them especially girls and women.</li> <li>• Infrastructural development in schools, for example, building girls' hostels.</li> <li>• Textbook provision in schools.</li> </ul>
5	Kola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides assistance to vulnerable families so that they can educate their children.</li> <li>• Rehabilitation of public schools to transform them into "Child Friendly Schools" (i.e., improving the school environment, making it conducive for learning for children).</li> </ul>
6	Pona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports child rights' clubs in schools by working through local and national NGOs.</li> <li>• Monitoring and tracking the education budget expenditure by working in partnership with local and national NGOs.</li> </ul>
7	Tona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports vulnerable children in community schools.</li> </ul>
8	Zona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobbying and advocacy aimed at ensuring that the achievement of EFA and MDGs goals on education by 2015.</li> <li>• Monitoring and tracking the education budget expenditure</li> </ul>
9	Hona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps children to access their rights to education. Empowers local communities, mostly rural communities</li> </ul>

		<p>economically so that they can educate their children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child protection and participation.</li> <li>• Health including HIV and AIDS.</li> </ul>
10	Mona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports vulnerable and disadvantaged children particularly girls by paying school fees for them.</li> <li>• Provides uniforms, books, pencils and other school requirements to vulnerable and disadvantaged girls in basic schools.</li> <li>• Child protection and participation.</li> </ul>

As indicated above, purposive sampling method was one of the procedures used to select NGOs. Purposive sampling of NGOs was based on my own judgement with the help of my own informed observations and information that I obtained from a friend (a former NGO employee) and colleagues at the University of Zambia. I concentrated on Educational NGOs which would provide information to answer my research questions. The aim was to focus on those NGOs working in the education sector which were relevant to my study and would provide rich information to illuminate the questions under study. As Patton (1990:169) points out,

The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of research, thus the term *purposeful* sampling.

Some NGOs were suggested to me by NGO representatives who participated in the interviews as they felt I would obtain more information from those NGOs. In turn, I made contacts with those NGOs and arranged for interviews. In this regard, I used the snowball sampling procedure too, as a sample emerged through a process of reference from one person to the next (Densombe, 1998).

The first NGO was chosen because: a) it is an international NGO, b) it is one of the oldest NGOs worldwide, c) it has a reputation and is a well-known NGO. The second NGO was selected because it promotes literacy in the non-formal education sector. It was chosen mainly to enable learning of the work of NGOs in non-formal education in the education sector. The third NGO was selected because it promotes human rights. The fourth NGO was selected on the basis of the following: a) it supports girls' education, b) it does advocacy and lobbying for educational policies that promote the education of girls and women, c) it has a reputation and is a prominent NGO. The fifth NGO was chosen because: a) it is an international NGO, b) it works with excluded and vulnerable children, c) it works mostly in rural areas. The sixth NGO was selected because: a) it is an international NGO, b) it is one of the oldest NGOs in the world and operates in both countries of the North and South. The seventh NGO was chosen because it promotes the education of vulnerable and disadvantaged children through community schools. The eighth NGO was selected because of the following factors: a) it is an umbrella organisation for NGOs, teachers' trade unions, community and faith-based organisations, b) it promotes Education for All goals in Zambia, c) It does advocacy and lobbying. It was chosen in order to assist me to have a deeper understanding of the work of NGOs in Zambia and to enable me to make meaningful conclusions.



I spent a period of four weeks at the fourth NGO, a national NGO. During my time at this NGO, I reviewed internal documents and joined in for field visits with NGO staff. At the fifth NGO, an international NGO, I spent two weeks. This was because of the busy schedule of NGO staff who felt that if I stayed longer at their organisation I would encroach into their time as, according to them, they had a lot of activities to attend to including their donors who were to visit for a week. During my time at this NGO, I also reviewed internal documents and undertook field visits to NGO projects. This helped with my research role as a participant observer as I was able to see and experience real happenings of the work of NGOs i.e., NGO educational projects.

At both NGOs (i.e., the fourth NGO and fifth NGO mentioned earlier), apart from the semi-structured interviews that I conducted with key NGO officers, I had many informal conversations with NGO staff during lunch breaks, around the office and during field visits. I must mention that I left in-depth interviews using semi-structured guides towards the end of my stay at each NGO in order to allow for more informed questions about different aspects of NGOs and was able to benefit from a stock of common experiences acquaintances and knowledge. During my stay at each NGO I got to know the work and everyday challenges most NGOs face. My case-study was an instrumental one as it was seen earlier and it was ethnographic in nature. According to Atkinson and Hammersley (2007):

In terms of data collection, ethnography usually involves the researcher participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal

interviews, collecting documents and artefacts – in fact gathering whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of the inquiry (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007:3).

This case-study included the observational component embedded in ethnography by employing participant observation as one of data collection methods.

Apart from spending time at the two NGOs noted above, time and again I was invited by a Civil Society Organisation<sup>5</sup> mentioned earlier to participate in its activities as part of my data collection programme. For example, on 9/12/2010, I was in attendance at a workshop organised by this umbrella organisation where it invited many other stakeholders including the deputy minister of education as it was doing its review of 2010 and annual planning for 2011. With this particular CSO, I conducted semi-structured interviews with three key officials who included the head of the organisation (the director) and the programme manager because they were available and they were knowledgeable about the work of their organisation.

I also visited 4 other NGOs where I conducted semi-structured interviews with programme managers and other NGO officers. This means that I visited a total of 8 NGOs in this research. Since analysis of data started during my fieldwork, I did follow-up interviews too in order to fill in any gaps as themes started emerging.

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5. An umbrella organisation for educational NGOs and education trade unions

#### 4.6.7 Advantages and Limitations of the Case study method

Although, the case study method has been one of the most criticised for its lack of generalisability, it has been one of the most used methods of social science research. Case studies have been criticised mainly by the post positivists. For example, Yin (2009) draws our attention to one of the prejudices against the case study method that it provides little basis for scientific generalisation. Positivists often use experiments which involve having a control experiment. In educational research, one might argue that having a control is illusory and there is not a single reality but multiple realities. Denscombe (2002:18) notes, “Science has a lot to answer for – not all of it”.

While the postpositivists have little interest in case studies except as sources of ideas that lead to “real” research, both critical and interpretive researchers time and again use the case study approach (Willis, 2007). This is because of the advantages that case study research offers. It is important at this point to analyse the advantages and disadvantages of using case studies. Willis (2007) points out that critical and interpretive researchers see the case study method as having the following advantages: it allows one to collect rich, detailed data in an authentic setting; it is holistic and therefore supports the idea that much of what we can know about human behaviour is best understood as lived experience in the social context; and unlike experimental research it can be done without predetermined hypotheses and goals. He further points out that all these advantages are pluses only if one accepts a different purpose for research than the predict and control goals of postpositivism. Interpretivist researchers do not seek to find universals in their case studies, instead they seek, a full, rich understanding of the context they are studying (Willis, 2007).

This study being an instrumental case study has allowed me to use multiple sources of data. As a result, it has facilitated the validation of data through triangulation (this is discussed in detail later in this chapter). The use of an instrumental case study has also enabled me to be focused in that I have been able to deal with the intricacies of the role of Non-Governmental Organisations in Basic Education with reference to education policy reform in Zambia. In particular, it has allowed an understanding of the relationships among NGOs, government and donors in a detailed way. Thus, helping one to understand issues holistically rather than based on isolated factors.

Case studies can be theoretically exciting and rich in data. “What a case study can do that a survey normally cannot is to study things in detail” (Denscombe, 2010:53). Hartley (2004) notes that case studies are particularly suited to research questions which require detailed understanding of social and organisational processes because of the rich data collected in context. Therefore, in my use of the case study approach I concentrated more on research questions about ‘how’ and ‘why’ rather than ‘what’ or ‘how much’.

However, case studies are demanding. Case studies can be demanding as emotionally, the demands of working closely with a variety of informants in their organisational settings means attention to one’s own behaviour and its possible effects on others (Hartley, 2004). In this study, during my visits at NGOs I ensured that I displayed positive behaviour. For example, during field visits with NGO staff, I ensured that I reported on time, even when some of them came late, past the agreed time, I watched my words and was calm as I did not want such situations to impact negatively on my data collection. I was on the receiving end, therefore, I had to follow their timings so that they could assist me with data.

#### **4.7. Research Instruments**

The data collection instruments employed in this study were semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, participant observations and document analysis. In the next section I will explain in detail how I employed these data collection tools. The methods of data collection were influenced by the following: the nature of the data to be collected, the research questions to be asked, scope of the study and ways of maximising trustworthiness of the data. Since it was difficult to conduct a pilot study as I did not find individuals in my research area to help, the research tools were reviewed by my supervisors and a colleague at the University of Zambia before I started conducting my research. This helped with the shaping and refining of my research instruments.

#### **4.8. Methods**

To begin with, I need to mention that there are overlaps in this section especially on interviews in order to emphasise issues. Methods are essentially data collection approaches. As already noted, the case study can be used in both quantitative and qualitative research. In this study, the case study will be based on the qualitative approach to research, and the methods used for data collection will be based on the qualitative methodology. Qualitative methods aim at understanding meanings in people's lives. Porta and Keating (2008:26) write: "qualitative research aims at understanding events by discovering the meanings human beings attribute to their behaviour and the external world. The focus is not on discovering laws about causal relationships between variables, but on understanding human nature, including the diversity of societies and cultures". And Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) put it this way:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

In other words, in qualitative research, researchers are interested in understanding how human beings make sense of their world and the experiences they have in their world.

It is important to note that qualitative research will still be valid even without quantified data. As Silverman points out,

Qualitative researchers suggest that we should not assume that techniques used in quantitative research are the *only* way of establishing the validity of findings from qualitative or field research. This means that a number of practices which originate from quantitative studies may be *inappropriate* to qualitative research. These include the assumptions that social science research can

only be valid if based on experimental data, official statistics or the random sampling of populations and that quantified data are the only valid or generalizable social facts (Silverman, 2001:32).

A variety of data collection methods can be used in qualitative research. In qualitative research, the following data collection techniques can be used: documents, observations (direct and participant, non-participant, video, etc), focused interviews, and semi-structured interviews, photography, artwork, diaries, etc (Merriam, 2009; Denscombe, 2010). As noted above in this chapter, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, documents and participant observations were utilised in the course of this study. I used a combination of methods in data collection in order to triangulate data collection and variety of perspectives and, therefore, improve trustworthiness of the data. At this point before I explain in detail the techniques that I used in data collection, it is important that I restate the paradigm that I have chosen to work within.

I am working within the Critical Theory paradigm. This choice reflects my theorisation of the issue of the role of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform in Lusaka province of Zambia, which is being conceptualised as inhibited within structural and discursive limitations associated with the processes of global markets. The Critical Theory paradigm helps me to theorise that in society there are certain ideologies that attempt to maintain the status quo by restricting access of groups to the means of acquiring knowledge. The role of NGOs in education policy reform in Zambia has to be understood in the context of them (NGOs) attempting to change the status quo with a view to bring about social justice by helping the marginalised and disadvantaged children to acquire education. However, the role of NGOs in

the provision of education appears to be hampered by certain political and economic ideologies such as neoliberalism; financial dependence and weak human resource as it will be seen later in detail in chapters 5 and 6. Education policy in Zambia appears to be shaped within the global education policy field. This encourages the exploration of the participation of NGOs in education policy in relation to the achievement of EFA in Zambia. Below are the data collection techniques that I used in this study:

#### 4.8.1. Interviews

Semi-structured or in-depth interviews were conducted with NGO officers, donor representatives, Ministry of Education officials, headteachers, teachers, academics and some community members.

**Table 11:** Semi- structured interviews with various stakeholders

Category of interviewee	Number of officers/representatives
National NGOs	9
International NGOs	4
Donor Agencies	6
Headteachers	7
Teachers	13
Academics	4
Ministry of Education Officials	5
Community members*	3



<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>
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\*These are community members from three different local communities. Due to limitations including time, semi-structured interviews were conducted with these community members instead of focus group discussions which were supposed to have been conducted. However, from the other four local communities, focus group discussions were conducted (this is explained in detail later in this chapter).

The basis for selecting interviewees for this study was threefold: first, notions of which government departments and donor agencies were important in shaping education policy; second, NGOs which were important in educational provision; finally, individuals who experience education policy implementation.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both national NGOs (these are indigenous NGOs) and International NGOs. NGO officers who were interviewed were key officers who were working in the education department. Donor representatives who were interviewed were mainly education advisors. Ministry of Education officials were selected on the basis of belonging to the departments which formulated education policies and their role in making education policies. Headteachers were selected from basic schools which received support from NGOs. At each identified school which was supported by NGOs, the headteacher was asked for an interview. In addition, a total of 13 teachers were interviewed at these basic schools. These teachers were purposively selected based on accessibility and convenience within the study period. In addition, using purposive sampling Academics (university lecturers) were selected. They were chosen on the basis of their familiarity with the work of

NGOs due to having worked for NGOs before joining the University or being involved in some NGO activities as part of community service.

The interview guides for NGOs centred on the type of activities of educational NGOs, NGO involvement in education policy-making, NGO involvement in the implementation of the Basic Education policy, NGO-Government relations, and ultimately the impact of NGO intervention on access and quality of Basic education in Zambia. The interview guides for Ministry of Education officers focused on Ministry of Education officers' perceptions on the role of NGOs in education policy-making and implementation, children's access to schooling at the Basic education level, and the quality of education in basic schools. The interview guides for donors centred on their provision of funding to the Ministry of Education and NGOs in Zambia, reasons for donors working with NGOs, and the influence of donor assistance on access as well as quality of Basic education. The interview guides for headteachers and teachers focused on the educational activities of NGOs in basic schools, children's access to schooling at the Basic education level, and the nature of the quality of education in basic schools. The interview guides for academics centred on NGO-Government relations, strength of NGO advocacy voice in the Basic education sector, their perceptions on the contributions of NGOs to the improvement of access to Basic education, and their perceptions on the contributions of NGOs to the improvement of the quality of Basic Education. The interview guides for community members focused on community members' perceptions on the work of NGOs in the education sector, children's access to Basic education and community members' perceptions on the quality of education that is being provided.

I conducted all the interviews. The fieldwork consisted of 51 semi-structured interviews. As earlier mentioned, apart from the semi-structured interviews that I carried out with key NGO officers, I had many informal conversations with NGO staff during lunch breaks, around the office and during field visits. Semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility as I was able to ask probing questions. Since it was a conversation, as a researcher I had an opportunity to clarify questions that were not clearly understood by the interviewee and also allowed for further clarifications from the interviewee. Additionally, semi-structured interviews including informal interviews with NGO officers gave me an opportunity as a researcher to make follow-ups with the interviewees and seek further clarification and follow-up new insights after reading through the interview notes. This facilitated the collection of detailed information and reinforced the quality of research findings.

As noted earlier in this chapter, respondents were purposively selected. Purposive sampling procedure can be used as a way of getting the best information by selecting items or people most likely to have the experience or expertise to provide quality information and valuable insights on the research topic (Denscombe, 2010). Additionally, some interviewees suggested individuals that I should interview as they felt I could collect detailed information from them which could help me answer my research questions. I made contacts with such individuals and arranged for interviews. In this way, I used the snowball sampling procedure to select some interviewees. Denscombe (2010:37) notes: "With snowball sampling the sample emerges through a process of reference from one person to the next". One strength of snowball sampling is that the researcher can approach each new person, having been, in a sense, sponsored by the person who had named him or her (Denscombe, 2010). Using the nominator as a reference facilitated the arrangement for interview meetings. This appeared to enhance my credibility as the interviewees did not approach me as a completely new person. I

need to mention here that I also conducted personal communication with a retired Professor of Education who I was referred to by one of the Ministry of Education officers because he was involved in the formulation of the current educational policy of Zambia (i.e., the 1996 *Educating Our Future*).

A semi-structured interview guide using recursive techniques (i.e., some questions were repeated) was used to provide some consistency across the topic while at the same time allowing questions and probes to be generated by the researcher in response to the particular topics and themes that emerged during any specific interview, hence capturing detailed descriptions of individual experiences (Burgess-Limerick and Burgess-Limerick, 1998; Fassinger, 2005). This interview guide of open-ended questions facilitated the interview process and allowed the respondents to answer in their own words (see Appendix A). Bray (2008:309) puts it: “Interviews serve to deepen the inside knowledge of the community under study.” In this study, the main themes included: involvement of NGOs in Education policy-making, impact on policy decisions, advocacy, Government-NGO relationship, sustainability of NGO projects/programmes, NGOs and access to education, NGOs and quality of education, and NGO contribution to the achievement of EFA in Zambia.

Additionally, in-depth interviews are advantageous as meaningful information about respondents’ attitudes, values and opinions can be obtained; they assist in clarifying some concepts and problems, and they allow for the establishment of a list of possible answers or solutions which, in turn, facilitate the elimination of superfluous questions or the reformulation of ambiguous ones; they allow for the discovery of new aspects of the problem by investigating in detail some explanations given by respondents; and the interviewer can

adjust questions and change direction as the interview is taking place (Langley, 1987, Bless and Claire, 1988). As noted earlier in this chapter, using semi-structured interviews not only granted me the opportunity to clarify questions that were not clearly understood by the respondent but also to seek further clarifications from the respondent. In this way, semi-structured interviews tend to enhance credibility.

The semi-structured interview guide and the focus group discussion questions were developed before the interviews. However, they were changed from the initial version in that some new questions were added to them as the research developed and as I came across new material and information. For example, the semi-structured interview guide for donors, I added some of the following questions: ‘How do you provide funding to the Ministry of Education?’, ‘How has it worked?’, and ‘How has your assistance influenced policy in the area of access to Basic Education?’ I ensured that I prepared adequately for interviews before conducting any of them. There were many instances during interviews when the interviewees referred to some terms or documents with the supposition that I already knew them. My initial preparation to know as much as possible and continuous engagement with the material I collected assisted well in this regard. Data collected at one interview helped to shape the other interviews that followed and therefore provided some degree of cross-checking.

Before starting formal data collection, I sought advice from colleagues at the University of Zambia and a friend who had past experience working for an NGO for two years in Zambia about the situation on the ground. I was given advice about the situation that was obtaining on the ground and possible starting points. Based on this advice I made contacts with NGOs

to arrange for interview appointments with key NGO staff. For the donor organisations and Ministry of Education I visited them in order to arrange for appointments for interviews. This helped to save time as it avoided the long period of waiting as was the case when I dealt with NGOs on phone.

As research etiquette to begin with, I decided to meet more than once with key members of NGOs, donors and Ministry of Education officials - these are members concerned with education policy making and implementation (policy actors). I did this because I wanted to build a rapport before conducting a formal interview. From the onset of my fieldwork, I was aware that donor representatives, bureaucrats and many NGO staff in Zambia, whatever their particular position in the organisational hierarchy, are almost all firmly entrenched within the privileged middle class. They are generally well connected, often well educated, a few even affluent. Interviewing such individuals, like interviewing anyone calls for care, tact, development of rapport, even a degree of empathy. I managed to meet more than twice with NGO officers which proved very informative. However, I could not achieve this with some of the policy actors among donors and officials at the Ministry of Education due to limited time and non-availability of interviewees. I was dealing with “policy elites” and was aware of the challenges this holds for the interviewers in gaining access, interviewing them and interpreting their voices (Ball, 1994; Lilleker, 2003). Having access to elites can be difficult because, by their nature, ‘they establish barriers that set their members apart from the rest of society’ (Hertz and Imber, 1993:3). “Policy elites” tend to possess more power than the interviewer. As Bygnes (2008) note, researchers lack relative power to elites. “The power of an elite interviewee stems from organizational hierarchy, corporate values and history, personal assets and degree of international exposure” (Welch, *et al.*, 2002: online). As a researcher, I negotiated access by using the reference letter from the University of Edinburgh,

personal connections where possible, and I drew attention to my institutional affiliation, the University of Zambia. As Welch, *et al.* (2002) note,

The challenge of researchers in elite settings is somewhat different. There, the issue is rather a matter of proving one's professional credentials and standing. Researchers must demonstrate they are worthy of the time and support of busy and often powerful individuals (Welch, *et al.*, 2002:online).

I negotiated access in a polite, yet persistent and opportunistic manner.

It must be pointed out that the need to maintain rapport with my interviewees did not affect the integrity of this research as I even asked challenging questions following the advice of Alikhan, *et al.* (2007). For example, a Ministry of Education official was asked: 'Do donors allow you to carry out your own educational activities with their funding?' When interviewing policy elites, particularly the high ranking officials of the Ministry of Education, it appeared that they were using interviews as an opportunity to project a particular image of themselves and their institutions that they represented. In interviewing high Ministry of Education officials I saw that they depicted a picture of being in control and owning the policy development process without any concerns of external pressures such as donors. This situation, however, contrasted with the actual situation when we witness that the Ministry of Education depends heavily on foreign aid and thus gives donors control of the education policy process through conditionalities attached to aid. It could be a discursive strategy that policy elites, in this case, Ministry of Education officials use to command authority even though they seem not to have it in real practice.

Except for the initial challenge of gaining access to some NGOs, once I was allowed access, interviewees readily agreed to the interview. Also, the majority of interviewees from other organisations, institutions, and communities readily accepted to be interviewed. Though I need to mention here that there were some challenges with high government officials as they were not readily available because of being 'locked up' in meetings most of the time I was in the field. There were instances where I had to wait for a long time (sometimes 4 hours) in order to interview a particular government official as it was difficult to get hold of him and time for my fieldwork was drawing to a close. Apparently, this particular government official never consented to an interview appointment, that is, the time to interview him. He mentioned to me that I should interview him whenever I chance upon him as he was a busy man. Therefore, I had no choice but wait for long hours in order to interview him. Indeed, this is one of the real challenges for any researcher.

A reference letter from the University of Edinburgh helped to arrange for interviews with NGO officers, donor representatives and Ministry of Education officials. I also sought written permission from the Lusaka Provincial Education Officer at the Provincial Ministry of Education in order to obtain data from basic schools. The interviewees were assured that the data collected from them were purely for academic purposes and that the information would be treated with strict confidence.

Most interviewees were contacted by phone and an appropriate time and quiet place of their choice was arranged for the interview. The majority of interviews were held in the respondents' offices, one at a local community and three at public facilities. Interviews took place at a time and a place arranged by the respondent.



On arrival at each venue some brief time was spent to build rapport with each interviewee (Smith, 1995). Then the purpose of the study and the way in which the interview would be carried out was explained to the interviewee. Interviewees were reassured of the confidentiality of the information that they were sharing and how it would be used. The interviewees were also given the opportunity to ask any questions or concerns they had about the study and these were answered.

Nearly every interview concluded with statements and questions like “I have no more questions, is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have anything you would like to say? Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me today, I greatly appreciate it. Kindly, contact me if you think of anything else you would like to add.” This allowed each respondent to have the opportunity to share any further experiences which, as noted by Patton (2002) is a very useful device. At the end of each interview, interviewees were thanked for their participation.

Most of the interviews were conducted in English, which the informants were comfortable with, and lasted on average one hour. Interviews with some community members were conducted in a local language, Nyanja as that was the language that they understood well. Answers were either both tape recorded and recorded in handwriting or recorded in handwriting where the informants were not comfortable with tape-recording. Many of my respondents especially among NGO staff felt uncomfortable with me recording interviews because NGOs in Zambia have strict rules (though unwritten in most cases) for employees about disclosing certain NGO information. My interview questions were semi-structured and included open-ended questions which made it considerably easier for fully writing down

responses. It is important to mention that I translated the interviews and focus group discussions that I conducted with some community members in a non-English language (Nyanja) to English. My colleague, a lecturer at a Nursing College in Malawi who understands Nyanja verified my translated scripts. She listened to the recorded interviews and checked my translated scripts and confirmed that they were an accurate representation of what she had listened to.

I catalogued all the material collected during the fieldwork. The interviews were transcribed and later analysed. The field notes (observation and interview notes) were typed up.

#### 4.8.2. Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions were one of the methods that were used in this study. Whereas semi-structured interviews were in the form of one-to-one interviews in that they involved a meeting between the respondents and the researcher, focus group discussions consisted of small groups of people (between 6 and 10) from the local communities who were brought together to explore their perceptions and feelings on the role of NGOs in the education sector. I gathered more detailed data in focus group discussions than in one-to-one interviews as focus group discussions allowed for expressions of a range of views and opinions because they involved a number of people. Focus groups comprise small groups of people, ideally between 6 and 9 individuals who are brought to discuss a particular topic chosen by the researcher who moderates or structures the discussion (Denscombe, 2010). Table 12 below shows the participants in the focus group discussions. They were chosen because they resided in communities surrounding the basic schools which were part of my sample which received

assistance from NGOs. Also, they were selected because they were parents and guardians who sent their children to these schools supported by NGOs.

**Table 12:** Focus Group Discussions

Focus group	Stakeholder Group (s)
1	Headman (1), community leaders (2), Parent leader, Parent Teachers' Association (1) , Parents (6)  <b>Total:10</b>
2	Community leader (1), Parents (9)  <b>Total:10</b>
3	Parents and Guardians  <b>Total:10</b>
4	Parent leader , Parent Teachers' Association (1),  Parents (5)  <b>Total:6</b>
5	Parents and Guardians (6)  <b>Total:6</b>
6	Parent Teachers' Association (1), Parents (7)  <b>Total:8</b>

Questions in the focus group discussion guide were used loosely as interview prompts. For example: 'Is education being provided to all school aged children?' 'What kind of role do NGOs play in Basic education?' (see Appendix A). Focus groups were facilitated by me. I assumed the role of a moderator in the focus groups and contributed minimal dialogue to maximise opportunities for everyone to interact with each other. Polit and Beck (2006) note that the main advantage of the focus group is the potential to generate a substantial amount of dialogue. This was the case in this research.

On the other hand, one disadvantage may be that some individuals may not be at ease communicating in a group format. In two focus groups, the researcher recognised some participants, particularly women who had not spoken. The role of the moderator as pointed out by Polit and Beck (2006) is to guide the discussion, which is what she did. The researcher encouraged the women to speak and they did. However, if I were to conduct these focus group discussions again, I would separate females from males. This is because when men and women are grouped together in this context men tend to dominate and women do not speak freely in discussions.

The focus group interviews consisted of 6-10 individuals, both male and female. The longest focus group interview lasted for a period of 1 hour 30 minutes. Most often, the interviews began slowly with very limited contributions but gained momentum as the discussion progressed. Focus group members felt more at ease to contribute later than at the start of the discussion.

However, in two communities, it was difficult to conduct focus group discussions due to the small number of community members available. In these two communities, it was found that the majority of members were busy with farming activities and other income generating ventures, hence, they could not be available for focus group discussions. It was, therefore, important to adopt a different kind of research method and the semi-structured interview was preferred. Of course, this led to the loss of detail that one would obtain from focus group discussions. However, I managed to obtain detailed information from person to person interviews which were cross-checked with interview data obtained from the schools in the same communities.

#### 4.8.3. Documents

Policy documents, textbooks, journal articles and other documentation were reviewed. Policy documents and other documentation were mainly obtained from the Ministry of Education in Zambia. The main concern was to examine the educational policy documents and discover the role of NGOs in education policy reform in Zambia. I am well aware that caution must be taken not to restrict our understanding of texts to those that come with 'policy text' stamped all over them (Ozga, 2000). However, due to limitations that included time, I only analysed major educational policy documents of Zambia and annual reports from two NGOs (i.e., Tona and Kola where I spent most of my time during fieldwork). The other documents such as textbooks and articles as well as documents from NGOs such as mission statements, advertisements, and public relations material on the World Wide Web were reviewed only as sources of information.

The policy documents were analysed based on the following three questions: ‘Who wrote them?’ ‘For what purpose?’ ‘What conflicts are inherent in these policies?’ (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). The 1977 Educational reform document which is the first educational policy in Zambia was written by the government with wide public consultation. The policy document was written in response to the local needs and aspirations. The second educational policy ‘Focus on Learning’ was funded by the World Bank (Ministry of Education, 1992) and appears to have been written by the World Bank. There was little public consultation when ‘Focus on Learning’ document was been written. The third and current educational policy, ‘Educating Our Future’ was formulated based on evaluation studies funded by the World Bank and other donor agencies (Takala, 1998) with little local input (Fieldnotes, March, 2011). As a consequence, these two educational policy documents are not responsive to local needs, in fact, as it has been argued in this thesis, they tended to worsen inequalities in education thereby promoting the global economic agenda. The blending of local imperatives in these two educational policy documents causes conflict between local needs and global needs. For example, whereas global policy emphasises universal primary education (for example, seven years of primary education for Zambia), local policy emphasises nine years of basic education.

In addition, I analysed the three policy documents in Zambia mentioned above to understand the role of NGOs in the education Sector. There is no mention of the role of NGOs in the first and second national educational policies in Zambia. The third educational policy document which is the current official government policy acknowledges NGOs as partners in education provision but it does not stipulate the role of NGOs in this partnership. As Buchert ( 2002) notes, during the 1990 decade, the issues of partnership had appeared strongly on the agenda of international funding and technical assistance agencies as well as national governments in

Africa . Actually, partnership is often part of policy rhetoric but there is less consideration of how such partnerships can work in practice.

Furthermore, I evaluated annual reports from NGOs using the two questions already stated earlier: ‘Who wrote them?’ and ‘For what purpose?’ (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). The aim was to understand the contributions of NGOs to improving accessibility to education and quality of education. Practically every annual report presented a self-assessment and evaluation of the NGO. Every annual report pointed out the glossy achievements NGOs had made in the education sector. For example, Tona noted in its report in 2009: “The bursary intervention has contributed significantly to increasing access, retention and completion for both girls and boys from disadvantaged families...” (FAWEZA, 2009:40). Here, the bursary intervention refers to the sponsorship that Tona was giving to school children. Most reports concluded that NGOs had made great achievements in the education sector. However, this was not in agreement with what was obtaining on the ground. At all the schools visited, the number of children sponsored by NGOs was small. This research revealed that some children had dropped out from school due to lack of sponsorship (Field notes, 17/01/11; 19/01/11).

Except for studies of preliterate societies, documentary information is likely to be of significance to every case study topic (Yin, 2009). The usefulness of documents is not based on their necessary accuracy or lack of bias. Indeed, the researcher must carefully use the documents and should not accept them as literal recordings of events that have taken place. Yin (1994:81) notes:

For case studies, the most important use of documents is to corroborate and

augment evidence from other sources. First, documents are helpful in verifying the correct spellings and titles or names of organizations that might have been mentioned in an interview. Second, documents can provide other specific details to corroborate information from other sources. If the documentary evidence is contradictory rather than corroboratory, the case study investigator has specific reason to inquire further into the topic. Third, inferences can be made from documents.

Policy documents are an important level of the narrative and it is through interpreting the ideas and critically considering the way language and persuasion/argument are used that one can gain insights into explicit and implicit agendas.

#### 4.8.4. Participant Observation

Participant observation is one of data collection methods used in various disciplines including Social Sciences. Kathleen DeWalt and Billie DeWalt (2002:1) explain that: “For anthropologists and social scientists, participant observation is a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture”. I spent a period of four weeks and two weeks at the national NGO and international NGO respectively doing participant observation. Though I need to mention that sometimes it was difficult to do participant observations when opportunities did not arise, instead I did non-participant observation where I only observed events as explained below. At the national NGO where I spent 4 weeks, I spent on average 6 hours a day at this NGO. At



the international NGO where I spent 2 weeks, I spent on average 7 hours a day. During my stay at each NGO, I reviewed internal documents and joined in for field visits with NGO staff. Participant observation also involved field visits to NGO project sites in order to gain a fuller understanding of the kinds of interventions in place. In situations where I did not have an opportunity to participate in NGO activities, I only observed the activities/events of the day. For example, at the national NGO I observed students/pupils who were being sponsored by this particular NGO coming to have their queries answered.

During my time at each NGO I learnt about the work and everyday challenges most NGOs face. At both NGOs I was regarded as a student researcher. No matter how I tried to involve myself in NGO activities, NGO staff would see me as a student researcher and as an ‘outsider’ at times. I remember one day, at a national NGO where I was doing participant observation, I tried to help the librarian stack the books on the shelf, he stopped me saying ‘You are student, you need to concentrate on your studies, your research’ (Field notes, 4/12/2010). Apparently, this librarian also knew that I was a lecturer from the University of Zambia, so he would not allow me to stack those books on the shelf. I felt frustrated as I thought helping out at this NGO would help me fit in as an ‘insider’. At each NGO, defining my own identity from the beginning was of prime importance. I defined my role as a researcher explicitly. Michael. H. Agar (1996:111) in his work on the Professional Stranger, writes: “So, the goal is to begin your work honestly presenting yourself and your task in some way that will make sense to group members”.

Apart from my stay at the two NGOs noted above, I was from time to time invited by the umbrella organisation (Civil Society Organisation) mentioned earlier to participate in its

activities. For example, on 9/12/2010, I was in attendance at a workshop organised by this umbrella organisation where it invited many other stakeholders as it was doing its review of 2010 and annual planning for 2011. I also participated in making submissions to Members of Parliament at the Zambian Parliament done by this CSO on the plight of community schools. I was among the panel making submissions speaking about the educational needs of vulnerable children. During this time, my role was seen as an advocate though I was mindful of my role as a researcher. Through participation on a task force submitting recommendations to Members of Parliament, I was able to observe the process by which NGOs engage policy-makers.

The first days at the two given NGOs mentioned above were used purely for observation. Observations continued in subsequent days as interviews (which were conducted close to the end of my stay at each of the two NGOs) were being administered. Using observation as a data collection instrument was extremely helpful in this study. As Merriam (2009: x) observes: "Observations differ from interviews in that the researcher obtains a first-hand account of the phenomenon of interest rather than relying on someone else's interpretation". Observation enables researchers to understand much more about what goes on in complex real-world situations than they can ever discover simply by asking questions of those who experience them (no matter how probing the questions may be), and by looking only at what is said about them in questionnaires and interviews (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). Participant observations were extremely helpful during my fieldwork because they confirmed or refuted interview reports. This played an important role in establishing the trustworthiness of the data collected.

#### **4.9. Data Analysis**

This section describes the analysis of the data. Following traditional case study and qualitative research methods, data collection and analysis was done almost simultaneously (Merriam, 2009). This implies data collection and data analysis were done hand in hand in order to allow for emerging findings to inform the data collection. Data collected through interviews was analysed qualitatively by coding, placed in categories and then were grouped into themes using the constant comparative analysis technique. Themes were arrived at after the coding process. As Miles and Huberman (1994:56) note:

Codes are tags or labels for assigning units or meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes usually are attached to ‘chunks’ of varying size- words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting.

The process used in this coding was initially to review the interview notes and transcripts as many times as I could. This involved splitting and dissecting these interview notes and transcripts into meaningful interpretations looking for patterns or dissonance, leading to the creation of categories and then refined as themes. Quotations were chosen to illustrate or illuminate themes. It is these quotations from different participants that were placed under some themes using what Miles and Huberman (1994:69) call “Pattern coding”, and describe Pattern coding as “a way of grouping summaries [quotations] into a small number of themes. In this study, the use of Pattern coding was extremely useful as it helped in supporting, conflicting as well as contradictory evidence from NGO representatives on one hand and the

government policy-makers and implementers on the other on the role of NGOs in educational policy-making and implementation.

Bryman (2012) draws our attention to the view that constant comparison (constant comparative method) is a central tool of grounded theory that entails constantly comparing new data with existing data, concepts, and categories. He explains that it also entails comparing categories with each other and categories with concepts. In this regard one is able to see contrasts between categories that are emerging.

In line with the constant comparative method I took one piece of data and compared it to other pieces of data that were either similar or different. During this process, I started looking at what made one piece of data different and /or similar to other pieces of data. Glaser and Strauss (1967:105) described the constant comparative method as having the following distinct stages: firstly, comparing incidents applicable to each category; and secondly, integrating categories and their properties. Goetz and Le Compte (1981:58) explain that the constant comparative method “combines inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all social incidents observed”. I read through the raw data in the form of interview notes, field notes from participant observations, and documents. I did a thorough line-by-line analysis for raw data obtained from interviews and participant observations. As I read each line, I would ask myself questions such as “What is this about?” and “How does it differ from the preceding or following statements?” Documents that were identified as having preliminary importance for understanding NGO involvement in the education sector were collected from various sources including government, NGOs and NGO websites. While reading through the raw data I jotted down notes and comments in the margins as well as

highlighted key words and phrases in order to understand the role of NGOs in policy-making and implementation. (Merriam, 1988:181) notes: “As you read down through the data these notations are next to bits of data that strike you as interesting, potentially relevant, or important to the study.” Actually, the initial reading through of the content enabled me to derive meaningful relationships within the data, ask questions of the data, and determine what may be researched further.

Unlike the deductive method which hypothesises at the start what will be found, the constant comparative analysis technique is inductive in that the researcher starts to examine data critically and draw new meaning from the data. Inductive analysis implies that patterns, themes and categories as Patton (1990:390) points out: “emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis”. The themes and categories used in this study emerged from the data. Bruner, Goodnow, and Austin (1972:16) explain that, “To categorise is to render discriminably different things equivalent, to group the objects and events and people around us into classes, and to respond to them in terms of their class membership rather than uniqueness”. I created categories by grouping or clustering the data. Categorising enabled me to reduce the complexity of the data and to order and relate classes of events. The themes and categories of the initial data in this study were examined side by side with those in subsequent interviews. Thereafter, the categories were regrouped to generate the most significant categories and themes. In order to identify significant categories and themes I searched for recurring language, key phrases, and patterns of assumptions that linked the participants and documents together (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). This process of internal convergence (Guba, 1978) involved identifying common phrases and words across the transcriptions, interview notes and documents that suggested patterns. These patterns were grouped into categories (Patton, 1990). Once sifting for convergence was done,

identifying what fits together internally, I considered “divergence”, and alternate perspectives. During this stage I identified the significant, grounded categories of meanings held by individual participants (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). The main themes that this research identified include: Service delivery, advocacy, types of relationships between NGOs and government, factors determining the strength of the relationship between NGOs and government, working with NGOs by donors, sustainability of NGO projects/programmes, conditionalities, NGOs and access to education and NGOs and quality of education (see Appendix B).

#### **4.10. Validity and Reliability – Trustworthiness**

In some fields of educational research, validity and reliability are vital as they are used in establishing and assessing the quality of any given research. The questions of validity and reliability are important within quantitative methods as well in different ways within qualitative methods (Brock-Utne, 1996; Silverman, 2001). Patton (2002) mentions that validity and reliability are two factors which any qualitative researcher should be concerned about while designing a study, analysing results and judging the quality of the study.

Silverman (2010:275) notes: “‘Validity’ is another word for truth”. Silverman (2010) notes that at times one may doubt the validity of explanation because the researcher has clearly made no attempt to locate an example in a broader context. In quantitative research, validity is concerned with whether the researcher is measuring what he or she thinks is measuring.

Sandelowski (1993) asserted that issues of validity in qualitative research should not be linked to 'truth' or 'value' as they are for positivists, but rather to 'trustworthiness', which 'becomes a matter of persuasion whereby the scientist is viewed as having made those practices visible and, therefore, auditable' (Sandelowski,1993:2). To ensure validity and reliability in qualitative research, establishing trustworthiness of research findings is crucial. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that it is necessary to specify terms and ways of establishing and assessing the quality of qualitative research that provide an alternate to validity and reliability. For example, they suggest trustworthiness as the criterion of how good a qualitative study is. Lincoln and Guba (1985: 290) note, " The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is...How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of ?"

Trustworthiness has been divided into four aspects which are parallel to the quantitative research criteria. These are: credibility, which matches with internal validity-i.e. how believable are the findings? Transferability, which is comparable to external validity- i.e. do the findings apply to other contexts? Dependability, which matches with reliability – i.e. are the findings likely to apply at other times? Confirmability, which parallels objectivity – has the researcher allowed his or her values to intrude to a high degree? (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bryman and Bell, 2007:43).

Credibility refers to the extent qualitative researchers can demonstrate that their data are accurate and appropriate ( Denscombe , 2010). In this study, in order to ensure credibility, I selected multiple methods for data collection. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, participant observations and documents were utilised in this study.

Triangulation of the multiple sources of data helped me to ensure credibility as it enabled me to collect adequate data necessary to answer the research question for I was able to corroborate findings thereby allowing me to see issues from a different perspective. I will be examining the issue of triangulation in greater detail later in this chapter, but in the meantime it is important to be aware of its definition: “Triangulation involves the practice of viewing things from more than one perspective. This can mean the use of different methods, different sources of data or even different researchers within the study” (Denscombe, 2010:346).

Another way I used in order to establish credibility was to show representative quotations from the transcribed text. Credibility was also enhanced through member checking. Validity can be enhanced through member checking (respondent validation) both during data collection and also after the first stage of the analysis has been completed (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2012). For example, during data collection, at one particular NGO, I summarised the key points obtained in interviews and observations and asked for confirmation from the respondent. The respondent confirmed that research findings were accurate. Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2012) noted that in qualitative research, this is an important strategy to reinforce the trustworthiness of the research as any inaccuracies or misinterpretations can be picked up before the final stage of the analysis is reached. They explain that, on the other hand, respondents can begin to self-edit, regretting certain comments made and wanting to amend transcripts. Further, they point out that respondents may not see the data as the researcher sees it and/or may take a very long time to respond, if at all (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2012). In this study, these issues did not arise. Additionally, as noted above the use of a colleague to verify my translated scripts helped to maintain the integrity of the analytical process of the data.



As noted above, transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings or with other groups (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Polit and Hungler, 1999). To facilitate transferability I presented my research findings together with appropriate quotations.

Dependability ‘seeks means for taking into account both factors of instability and factors of phenomenal or design induced change’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:299). In order to ensure dependability I utilised triangulation where multiple methods of data collection were used.

Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that, while recognising that complete objectivity is impossible in social research, the researcher can show to have acted in faith, i.e., it should be apparent that the researcher has not overly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings deriving from it (Bryman, 2004). In this study, in order to validate the data follow-up interviews were made to persons who were initially interviewed for clarification and validation. In addition, for example, through interviewing four members of a single NGO, it was possible to compare their descriptions of the work of this NGO in the education sector which allowed establishing confirmability of my research findings. Indeed, trustworthiness is concerned with establishing how worthwhile the research findings are.

#### **4.10.1. Triangulation**

Triangulation is a technique commonly used to strengthen the robustness of a qualitative study. Denzin (1978) has identified four kinds of triangulation which contribute to

verification and validation of qualitative analysis. These are: data triangulation – the use of a variety of data sources in a study; investigator triangulation – the use of multiple investigators; theory triangulation – the use of multiple theories or perspectives to interpret a single set of data; methodological triangulation – the use of multiple methods to study a single problem or programme. In each case triangulation involves checking findings against other sources and perspectives. Triangulation is a process by which the researcher can guard against the possibility that a study's findings are simply an artefact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator's biases (Patton, 1999). In this study, multiple data collection methods were employed to triangulate the findings. This study used semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, participant observations and document analysis in order to corroborate findings thereby allowing seeing issues from different perspectives. Triangulation enabled me to get a better understanding of the work of NGOs in the education sector from different positions. Additionally, through triangulation consistencies and patterns emerged that suggested validation of the findings.

#### **4.11. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues are a very important component to any social research. Social scientists continue to have the freedom to conduct research involving other people in large part, the product of individual and social good-will depends on social scientists acting in ways that are not harmful and are just (Israel and Hay, 2006). Israel and Hay (2006:2) elaborate upon this point by noting: "Ethical behaviour helps protect individuals, communities and environments, and offers the potential to increase the sum of the good in the world".

This study is in line with the ethical requirements in that participants were not forced into taking part but were given an opportunity to make informed and free choice to participate in the study. Issues regarding informed consent were addressed by providing informants with written information pertinent to the nature and purpose of the study. It is hoped that this study did not cause any harm to those people who were involved in the study as it was intended that their sensitivities and needs were taken into account. I hope that, indeed, this was the case.

During the conduct of this research I was conscious of the need to be aware of ethical concerns arising from the issues of confidentiality and consent. Since I was also dealing with influential policy actors I had to be careful that they gave fully informed consent to participating in this research and they were assured that the information collected from them would be treated with confidence. It was important that informants were assured of their anonymity in the process so they felt confident to share both negative and positive experiences of the work of educational NGOs without fear of possible consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity are maintained by not mentioning names of individuals in the report. However, it was difficult not to reveal names of some organisations because of the nature of work that they do.

#### **4.12. Field Challenges**

I encountered a number of challenges during my field work. I faced difficulties in gaining access to NGOs. I had to make a number of follow-ups (5 times in some cases) to most of the NGOs before an appointment could be made. Follow-ups were done by phone, email and visits. Some NGO representatives did not allow me to conduct research in their organisations.

In spite of persuasion by me they claimed to be too busy to allow me time to conduct research in their organisations.

At this stage it is important to recall the research question that was set out at the beginning in chapter 1.

#### **4.13. Research question**

The study investigated the role of NGOs in shaping and influencing education policy reform in Basic Education in Zambia. The question that guided the study was:

Does the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform enhance the achievement of EFA in Lusaka province of Zambia?

#### **4.14. Summary**

This chapter has discussed qualitative methodology as the design that was used in this study. The chapter explains that I am working with the Critical Theory paradigm, which is concerned with issues of power and social justice in social research. This was a theoretically informed research design, using case study to explore the rich and complex nature of NGOs and their role within education policy in Lusaka province. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, participant observation and documentary analysis were explained as methods that were used during data collection.

What follows is chapter 5 in which I present the findings of this research based on my fieldwork on the role of Non-governmental Organisations in Basic Education Policy Reform in Lusaka province.

## **Chapter 5**

### **PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **5.0. Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings to answer the research question: ‘Does the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform enhance the achievement of EFA in Zambia?’ in this instrumental case study. The case study is about the role of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform in Lusaka province of Zambia. Lusaka is the capital city of Zambia and also the headquarters of policy-making organisations, and normally, what is decided in Lusaka is rolled over to the rest of the country which made it a suitable site for this case study. Additionally, as it was seen in the previous chapter, the population of Lusaka province is higher than that of other provinces in Zambia. The high level of population in Lusaka province especially in Lusaka city has contributed to the expansion of informal or squatter settlements. The housing standards are generally poor in squatter settlements mainly because of poverty and lack of security of tenure (UN Habitat, 2007). Most vulnerable and disadvantaged children who do not have access to and receive education of poor quality live in these squatter settlements. Also, as noted in chapter 4, Lusaka has a high number of NGOs and these NGOs provide support to marginalised and disadvantaged children that made Lusaka an appropriate site for this study. The findings presented in this chapter emerge from interviews, participant observations, focus group discussions and document analysis.

The first section looks at NGO activities in the education sector in Zambia and thereafter, forms of NGO provision for Basic education in Education policy reform. The following section focuses upon the involvement of NGOs in Education policy-making in Zambia and

the reasons for influencing policy. The narrative explains why NGOs attempt to influence policy in Basic education in Zambia and the impact of NGOs on policy decisions. Interactions between NGOs and government are delineated with recognition of differences in NGOs and donor priorities. How NGO engagement in education has affected education provision (i.e., access to education and quality of education) is discussed as well as challenges faced by NGOs in service delivery and advocacy.

### **5.1. Fieldwork Report**

My fieldwork was conducted in Zambia from October 2010 to April 2011. During this period visits were made to NGOs working in the education sector, Ministry of Education national headquarters, and donor agencies. The visits also included schools, the University of Zambia and the Cabinet Office. Interviews were conducted with various stakeholders in the education sector. A variety of policy documents were collected.

The research findings consider the experiences in NGOs and schools, paying particular attention to issues of access, inequity and quality in education.

#### **5.1.1. NGO Activities in the Education Sector in Zambia**

NGO officers were asked to mention their role in the education sector. Their responses are shown in Table 13 below. Table 13 shows the activities undertaken by educational NGOs in Zambia. NGOs in their activities focused on meeting the educational needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged children. It is important to mention that pseudonyms of NGOs are used to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

**Table 13:** Activities of Case Study Educational NGOs in Zambia

	Name	Focus and Scope
1	Sona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has been working in Zambia since the 1980s.</li><li>• Campaigning and advocacy. Works with local and national NGOs to campaign and advocate for policy changes and increased accountability of service providers.</li><li>• Supports vulnerable children in community schools. Works through a national NGO which supports community schools.</li></ul>
2	Pona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has been working in Zambia since the 1980s.</li><li>• Supports child rights' clubs in schools by working through local and national NGOs.</li><li>• Monitoring and tracking the education budget expenditure by working in partnership with local and national NGOs.</li></ul>
3	Kola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has been working in Zambia since the 1980s.</li><li>• Provides assistance to vulnerable families so that they can educate their children.</li><li>• Rehabilitation of public schools to transform them into "Child Friendly Schools" (i.e., improving the school environment, making it conducive for learning for children).</li></ul>
4	Tona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Established in the 1990s.</li><li>• Advocates for policies and programmes that support the education of girls and women.</li><li>• Advocates for the removal of cultural practices that impinge on female education.</li><li>• Supports the disadvantaged and vulnerable students by paying school fees for them especially girls and women.</li><li>• Provides uniforms, books, pencils and other school requirements to vulnerable and disadvantaged girls in basic schools.</li><li>• Supports the disadvantaged and vulnerable students by paying school fees for</li></ul>

		<p>them especially girls and women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructural development in schools, for example, building girls' hostels.</li> <li>• Textbook provision in schools.</li> </ul>
5	Lala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Started in the 1990s.</li> <li>• Supports children's rights in schools. It focuses on child protection and participation.</li> </ul>
6	Shaba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established in the 1990s.</li> <li>• Empowers rural communities by providing them with non-formal education which involves skills training. It promotes literacy in rural communities especially among women and children.</li> </ul>
7	Nona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Started in the 1990s.</li> <li>• Supports vulnerable children in community schools.</li> <li>• Provides pre-service training of teachers.</li> </ul>
8	Zona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established in the 2000s.</li> <li>• Lobbying and advocacy aimed at ensuring the achievement of EFA and MDGs goals on education by 2015.</li> <li>• Monitoring and tracking the education budget expenditure</li> </ul>

From the above Table, while some NGOs are involved in both service delivery and advocacy for policy change, some are involved only in service delivery in schools and communities and others in only advocacy. Actually, NGOs have contributed to the development of basic education through their work in schools. This research indicates that even though NGOs work in both public and community schools, they focus on supporting vulnerable children in community schools.



### 5.1.2. Forms of NGO Provision for Basic Education in Zambia

#### a) Service Delivery

All the respondents mentioned that NGOs are involved in service delivery in Basic education. It was seen in the previous section that NGOs focus on supporting the disadvantaged and vulnerable, the table below shows service provision of NGOs based on interviews and observations.

**Table 14:** NGO Service Delivery in Basic Education in Zambia

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supply inputs to government and community schools (for example, teaching-learning materials)</li><li>• Support infrastructure development (for example, school building) of government and community schools</li><li>• Supply associated services (for example, teacher training)</li><li>• Establishment and running of community schools</li><li>• Support management of government-run schools (for example, Child-friendly schools)</li><li>• Support marginalised and disadvantaged children (for example, paying school fees for children)</li></ul> |
|--|

#### b) Advocacy

This research revealed that advocacy is a tool used by NGOs to reach government. Some interviewees from NGOs said that they used advocacy activities in order to influence policy

formulation and implementation. According to Holloway (1998:1) advocacy as practised by NGOs, “is a systemic, democratic, and organised effort by NGOs to change, influence, or initiate policies, laws, practices, and behaviour so that disadvantaged citizens in particular or all citizens in general will be benefited”. Advocacy means using influence to persuade others such as government and Members of Parliament to change their previous position to one which is consistent with meeting the needs of the citizens. Data from interviews showed that the majority of the INGOs work through their partner local or national NGOs to implement their programmes including advocacy work. Interviews with INGOs revealed the following:

- *As an International Organisation, we speak through our partners, the local NGOs. Otherwise, as an Organisation, we only make general statements. Statements such as ‘The Zambian Government must ratify the Education Bill’. When we talk a lot we can be told off that we are a foreign organisation receiving foreign funding* (International NGO officer 8, 2010).
- *We work with local NGOs, we don’t advocate or voice out ourselves. The government might think we are bringing in foreign ideas/our own agenda* (International NGO officer 1, 2010).

Data collected using the qualitative method through semi-structured interviews with NGO officers and observations revealed that NGOs advocate in the following ways: using the media, monitoring government compliance with international norms and agreements and budget tracking (monitoring government’s allocation to the education sector and spending at all levels), serving as representatives and advisory experts to policy discussion fora such as the Sector Advisory Group, conducting research, holding workshops and research seminars, and making submissions to elected policy actors such as Members of Parliament.

### 5.1.3. NGO Main Stakeholders

This study found that NGOs in their work in the education sector as primary stakeholders have to meet the needs of their three main stakeholders: the government, donors and the community (their clients). Thus, NGOs have to ensure good relations with the government and donors while at the same time must be able to meet the needs of their clients-the community. NGOs have to balance the interests of these three main stakeholders. Figure 1 below shows NGOs and their main stakeholders.



Figure 1: NGOs as primary stakeholders

**Source:** Produced by this researcher

#### **5.1.4. Involvement of NGOs in Education Policy Reform**

Interview data revealed that NGOs are involved in some phases of the policy-making cycle and in the implementation of education policy. NGOs were asked whether or not they were involved in education policy making. Of the 7 NGOs and 1 Civil Society Organisation (an umbrella organisation for NGOs) in the study, 6 of them and the umbrella organisation for NGOs stated that they were involved in education policy making, except for 1 NGO where the officer said that the organisation was not directly involved. NGO officers from the 2 international NGOs said that they were involved in education policy as they sit on the Projects Coordination Committee (PCC). PCC is part of the Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia (JASZ). It aims to coordinate the work of bilateral, multilateral and civil society-project supported activities in the education sector (Government of the Republic of Zambia, 2010). In the case of national NGOs, the majority said that they were members of the Sector Advisory Group (SAG) which gives them an opportunity to participate in education policy. The SAG is the main consultative forum in the education sector and was established in 2003 (GRZ, 2010). It plays an advisory and monitoring role concerning the implementation of education sector programmes (GRZ, 2010). The Projects Coordination Committee and Sector Advisory Group have served as important conduits for NGO involvement in education policy deliberations.

However, interview and observation data indicate that SAG meetings are rarely held. An officer of a CSO which is a member of the SAG said: “SAG meetings are normally held twice a year. When there is an issue to be discussed that is when meetings are called”. GRZ (2010:16) in its explanation of the working modalities of the SAG notes that:

The SAG are supposed to meet three times a year, or more often as

necessary, at the beginning, the middle and towards the end of the year,  
related to key sector events, i.e. budget preparation, on dates to be  
determined by the Chairperson and Secretary, in consultation with SAG  
members.

a) Policy-Making

(i) Participation in the formulation of education policy documents

Field observations indicate that NGOs did not participate in the formulation of the current education policy document, the 1996 ‘Educating Our Future’ policy document. In 1996, there was little recognition of NGOs by the government. When inviting stakeholders for meetings to discuss policy issues, the Ministry of Education just invited civil society in general without taking into account as to whether NGOs were there or not. Some NGO officers said that their organisations did not participate in the formulation of the official education policy document. While some NGO officers said that they were not sure because the people who were present at that time have since left the organisation because of high staff turnover or they have died. When I asked a top Ministry of Education official what role NGOs had played in the formulation of the ‘Educating Our Future’ policy document. He exclaimed: “*What role?! This policy was made in 1996! They were new on the scene then. They are just helping in the implementation of the policy*” (Ministry of Education official 2, 24/01/2011). The Ministry of Education official was correct in his statement as the NGO and the CSO that are involved in advocacy and policy dialogue were only established in 1996 and 2001 respectively (Field notes, 7/12/2010; 8/12/2010). I went further to interview a retired Professor of Education who was involved in the formulation of the Educating Our Future. He said:

*Educating Our Future was prepared by the University of Zambia. We did*

*most of the work. Academics worked on the document for five months and the Ministry of Education improved on it. The Ministry of Education called for a convention for about 3 days. At the convention, views of other stakeholders were taken into account. I can't remember if there were any NGOs present. But what I can say is that there was not much public participation as the 1977 Education Reforms (Retired Professor, personal communication , 2011).*

Similarly, another Ministry of Education official mentioned that when the 1996 policy document was being formulated, not much consultation was done as compared to the 1977 policy reform document. His statement was as follows:

*This regime does not consult widely. It was only during the formulation of the 1977 Education Reforms that there was wide consultation. What is happening nowadays is that someone can even make policy at home and bring it to the office that this is what you have to follow. Policy making is not straight forward or done smoothly as it looks (Ministry of Education 3, 2011).*

In-depth interviews with NGO officers and Ministry of Education officials indicate that NGOs were involved in the development of policy frameworks and plans aimed at the implementation of the 1996 official education policy document according to interview data.

For example, in the formulation and development of the chapter on education in the Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP), NGOs participated through the Sector Advisory Group (SAG). The SAG was divided into different thematic groups, where various stakeholders including NGOs worked on different sub-sectors of education: Early Childhood Education, Basic Education, High school Education, Tertiary Education and Skills and Adult literacy (Field notes, 25/02/2011). NGOs such as Tona and Zona were more concerned with basic education issues (Field notes, 25/02/2011). The sub-groups made submissions to the Ministry of Education Secretariat. However, the final draft of the education chapter in the Sixth National Development Plan (2011-2015) was compiled by the Ministry of Education Secretariat.

Even though Ministry of Education officials claimed that NGOs were involved in all stages of policy-making (Field notes, 25/02/2011). There were complaints from officers of Zona that it was not invited to consider the final draft of the Sixth National Development Plan. Such sentiments were common among NGOs, for example, in the development of the Fifth National Development Plan of the period 2005 to 2010, Tona felt the same. FAWEZA (2005) notes that the exclusion of gender specialists from the technical committee that edited and finalised the Fifth National Development Plan resulted in gender indicators not satisfactorily expressed.

NGOs confirmed that they made suggestions of what should be contained in the education chapter of Sixth National Development Plan. However, they felt that not all submissions were taken on board. NGO officers showed discontent about the quality of consultations that were made by government. NGO officers complained that most of the consultations were

superficial. One Ministry of Education official commented: “It is not always that what stakeholders say will be taken into account” (Ministry of Education official 5, 25/02/2011).

Additionally, these research findings through interviews and field observations showed that NGOs participated in the revision of the 1966 Education Act. The revision of the Education Act started in the 1990s. From the 1990s to date, various meetings, symposiums and seminars have been held as a strategy for getting information from stakeholders. On 18<sup>th</sup> January 2011, Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC), a CSO, made submissions to the Education, Science and Technology Parliamentary Committee on the need to legalise community schools and the need for the Government to fund these schools.

#### b) Implementation

Through service provision in education such as school construction, NGOs are involved in the implementation of education policy. This study found that NGOs are involved more in policy implementation than in policy making (as will be seen later in this chapter). This research indicates that the Zambian government takes total control over education policy though donors have much influence on policy direction as they determine the areas to fund.



#### **5.1.5. How NGOs participate in Policy Reform in Zambia**

Apart from the Sector Advisory Group and Projects Coordination Committee established through the Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia by donors and the Government of Zambia and NGO invitations by Government, NGOs themselves have used a number of strategies in their quest to influence policy. These have ranged from advocacy and lobbying for policy reform, demonstration (trying out of new ideas and innovations in their programmes), research and strategy papers and presentations at a number of different fora.

##### **a) Sector Advisory Group/ Projects Coordination Committee**

NGOs have platforms, the Sector Advisory Group, for local and national NGOs and Projects Coordination Committee (PCC) for INGOs, which enable them to participate in policy-making. As noted in the previous section, Sector Advisory Group meetings are held twice or thrice a year. In addition, this study found that only a small number of NGOs are members of the SAG. For example a CSO officer indicated: “We are concerned about the small number of NGOs that is represented on the Sector Advisory Group” (CSO officer 2, 2011). This is in line with the minutes of the Education Sector Advisory Group meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, where there were a total of 31 members in attendance but only 2 NGO officers from different NGOs were represented (Ministry of Education, 2010). NGO officers wished that the number of NGOs sitting on the SAG would be increased in order to strengthen the voice of NGOs in the policy development process.

##### **b) Invitations from Government**

When there is an issue that the Ministry of Education feels stakeholders such as NGOs should participate, invitation letters are sent to NGOs. For INGOs invitation is straight forward since they are few of them and have financial resources which give them

prominence. For local/national NGOs, I found that mostly, only distinguished NGOs such as Tona and Zona are invited. Comments from Tona and Zona officers are shown below:

- *Tona<sup>6</sup> is involved in education policy making. There is growing recognition of Tona as a reference point on girls' education as we have seen the government consulting us most times on issues to do with girls' education. We also sit on Sector Advisory Groups where policy decisions are made* (NGO officer 5, 2011).
- *As an organisation, we are recognised by the government. Whenever, there is a policy review process, Zona<sup>7</sup> is invited* (CSO officer 2, 2011).

However, small NGOs which have not been identified by the Government are not invited to attend meetings. NGOs were of the view that it is up to an NGO to work hard so that it makes itself relevant and be identified by the Government.

#### c) Coalition Formation

Coalition creation has been used as a means to leverage change and also engage in policy dialogue. The Zambia National Education Coalition (umbrella organisation for NGOs) was formed in 2001 (ZANEC, 2008: v).

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6. Pseudonym used for confidentiality purposes

7. Pseudonym used for confidentiality purposes

According to the Zambia National Education Coalition (2008):

The Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC) was established by like minded civil society organisations which came together to pursue an agenda to plan and implement advocacy activities aimed at ensuring that Government, Cooperating Partners, communities and other stakeholders put in place initiatives that will contribute to the achievement of the Education For All and the Millennium Development Goals on education by 2015 (ZANEC, 2008: v).

ZANEC (2008:1) continues: “The origin of ZANEC can be traced to the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000”. Therefore, the primary objective of ZANEC is to advocate and lobby government to formulate policies and programmes that would lead to the attainment of the EFA goals by the year 2015.

c) Advocacy Activities

Advocacy is one of the strategies that NGOs use to influence policy. This study found that NGOs undertake their advocacy activities by using the media (newspapers, TV or radio- news coverage and documentaries) and submissions to elected representatives such as Members of Parliament, as already mentioned above.

d) Demonstration/experimentation

One of the roles of NGOs working in the education sector has been experimentation and trying out of new approaches to education delivery. Officers from 2 NGOs stated that they

use new innovations to influence policy change and at least have their programmes adopted by Government. For example, Kola<sup>8</sup> has tested an innovative programme Active Teaching and Learning Approaches (ATLAS) in Mumbwa District of Zambia (Field notes, 5/01/2011). The purpose of the ATLAS programme is to improve the quality of education in schools. The programme aims to address the quality of teaching and learning through the effective use of active participatory, child-centred teaching and learning methodologies. The programme has not led to any change in government policy as many government officials view teacher training or pedagogy as a “reserved domain” and are reluctant to involve stakeholders such as NGOs in the actual training of teachers.

#### Policy Briefing Seminars/Research Seminars

NGOs such as Tona and Zona have used policy-briefing seminars that target top policy makers within the relevant government ministries to influence education policy. NGO interviewees from Tona and Zona said that they organised workshops and research seminars on education and invite senior policy makers to the opening of such meetings, where presentations are given on key research findings targeted at policy formulation and implementation.

For example, on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 this researcher attended a workshop organised by a Zona where the deputy Minister of Education was in attendance. Zona took advantage of that workshop to point out problem issues in education such as teacher absenteeism in schools.

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8. Kola is a pseudonym of an international NGO

Tona has organised research seminars in the past such as the 1998 national symposium on female participation in education management. This symposium drew together 207 participants, among them, the Deputy Minister of Education, permanent secretaries and other senior government officials (Unpublished internal document, 1998:5). The symposium aimed at influencing policy in order to ensure that female participation in education management is stepped up. In this way, female managers would act as role models to girls in order to encourage their participation in education at all levels.

In 2009 Tona had an audience with key policy makers, government officials and community leaders on the need to improve the safety and security of girls in school and at home (Field notes, 2/02/2011). This NGO was concerned about the long distance that the girls in rural areas cover to get to school and some girls who were renting shelters near the school. But these shelters were insecure because the girls were vulnerable to sexual abuse by some truck drivers as the shelters were situated in a risky place. Even though, this has not led to change in policy yet, the Zambian Government has acknowledged the need to improve the safety and security of school girls.

Field observations of this study showed that although the majority of NGOs included advocacy and lobbying in their advertisements as among the activities that they do, very few indeed, actually only 2, are involved in advocacy and lobbying (Field notes, 2010, 2011).

#### **5.1.6. Reasons for influencing policy**

##### **a) Promote EFA**

From the 8 NGOs in the study, NGO officers were asked why they involve themselves in education policy. Interview data from NGOs revealed that they attempt to influence policy in basic education in Zambia in order to promote the attainment of Education for All as education is regarded as a human right. NGOs see themselves as promoting human rights. This will be explored in detail in the subsequent chapter.

##### **b) Make government accountable**

NGOs also indicated that they are involved in education policy in order to make the government accountable. For example, Zona monitors and tracks the education budget expenditure. This assists Zona to lobby for increased budget allocation to the education sector and to monitor how financial resources are utilised in the education sector. This is in line with the neo-liberal agenda, where international Organisations, are calling for fiscal accountability of national governments (Kamat, 2004).

#### **5.1.7. Effect on Policy Decisions**

NGO Officers were asked if they had made any significant impact on policy decisions in the Basic education sector in Zambia. Some NGO Officers said that they were not sure as they work collectively with other stakeholders in the education sector, some stated that they had not made impact, while others said that they had made impact on policy decisions. Here are some of the statements by NGO officers on whether they had made any significant impact on policy decisions in the Basic education sub-sector:

a) Not sure

- *Well, I can't put my finger on it; we can't attribute it to ourselves because we are part of this bigger NGO, ZANEC. We work collectively (International NGO officer 7, 2010).*

b) No impact

- *No. We have not made any significant impact on policy decisions in education (NGO officer 3, 2010).*
- *No. Whatever successes may have been achieved which are results of NGO work, we cannot attribute it to our organisation because of the manner in which the consultation is done. When we are invited to meetings by the government, we are invited as civil society as a whole and at these meetings there are other stakeholders, e.g. some come from the private sector. So, when we speak, we represent the views of the group (NGO officer 2, 2010).*

c) Impact

- *Not much. However, we are engaging government to formalise community schools (International NGO Officer 1, 2010).*
- *Yes, our presence has influenced government to look at education from an EFA perspective. The Ministry of Education National Implementation Framework documents are now acknowledging the need to achieve EFA by 2015 and the importance of Early Childhood Education (CSO Officer 2, 2011).*
- *Yes, the re-entry policy that is in place is as a result of our efforts (NGO officer 5, 2010).*

This was cross-checked with interviews with Ministry of Education Officials. Two Ministry of Education Officials said the following:

- *The re-entry policy for school girl mothers is as a result of NGO pressure (Ministry of Education Official 1, 2011).*
- *FAWEZA advocated for the re-entry policy and it was at some function where FAWEZA was present where the Minister of Education made a pronouncement of the re-entry policy (Ministry of Education Official 3, 2011).*

FAWE (2004:4) notes that when FAWEZA (Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia) was established on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 1996, it added its voice to the call for policy change concerning girls who got pregnant. The policy that was in place at that time was that when school girls fell pregnant they were expelled from school. Meanwhile, the boys continued with their education in spite of impregnating school girls. FAWEZA spearheaded the campaign to allow girls who fall pregnant to return to school after delivery. As the Times of Zambia (2005) reports in its interview with FAWEZA National Director, where she stated that advocating for the re-entry of pregnant girls was one achievement the forum made as pregnancy was one major hindrance for girls' drop out from schools.

In September, 1997, a conference on girls' education was held at Mulungushi International Conference Centre, Lusaka, Zambia, at which the Minister of Education, at that time Dr. Syamukayumbu Syamujaye, announced that schoolgirls who fell pregnant would no longer be expelled, and that those that had been expelled in 1997 should be permitted to return to school (Ministry of Education, 2004).



FAWE (2004) draws our attention to the Political Will that was in place when the re-entry policy was pronounced. It explains that the Zambian government did not capitulate, even when there appeared to be more voices against than for the policy. It notes that the government maintained that expelling pregnant girls would make gender equality in the education sector impossible. It points out that Zambia, as a signatory to the Thailand Declaration on Education for All was duty bound to adopt gender-responsive policies such as the re-entry of pregnant girls. According to FAWE (2004) that took the fight out of the teaching staff and school authorities who were opposed to the policy.

The guidelines on how the re-entry policy was to be implemented were worked out by FAWEZA in consultation with the Ministry of Education and United Nations Children's Fund (Ministry of Education, 2004). These include:

1. How the school would be able to detect pregnancies;
2. The steps that need to be taken after a pregnancy has been detected;
3. The documents which should be given to the pregnant girl when she goes on leave and those that should be maintained by schools on pregnant girls;
4. The length of time for re-entry after delivery;
5. What can be done to improve the school environment and prevent pregnancies (Ministry of Education, 2004).

However, the implementation of the re-entry policy is not being done properly. As FAWEZA's National Director points out as captured by this researcher during her field observations:

The implementation of the re-entry policy is not being done properly. The re-entry policy guidelines are not followed well in schools. Failure to follow guidelines is negatively affecting the successful implementation of the re-entry policy. Some schools have no trained counsellors. There is need to revisit the way the policy is being implemented (Speaking on News, Radio Christian Voice, 10pm news, 21/03/2011).

However, in spite of NGOs' activities, there is only one tangible policy in place which is as a result of NGO's influence. This is the re-entry policy and was spear-headed by FAWEZA. NGOs have had limited impact on policy reform in the education sector in Zambia. This is because of the following reasons: few NGOs are involved in advocating policy change, therefore, the NGO policy voice is weak and the methods that NGOs use to reach Government are insufficient.

Even though, NGO programmes have had little effect on policy change, they have at least in some cases managed to influence policy direction. Some NGO programmes have played a role in influencing the Government to incorporate EFA targets and Millennium Development Goals in its educational policy frameworks such as the National Implementation Framework (2008-2010).

#### 5.1.8. Interactions between NGOs and Government

##### a) Partners

In the Education Sector, the official government policy acknowledges NGOs as partners in education provision but it does not stipulate the role of NGOs in this partnership. There was no mention of the role of NGOs in the first and second national educational policies in Zambia. For the first national educational policy of 1977, it may be because NGOs were not in existence in Zambia at that time. However, in the early 1980s NGOs were in existence in Zambia (Field notes, 2010). These were mainly international NGOs such as Oxfam and Save the Children which started working in Zambia in 1980 and 1983 respectively (Field notes, 2010, 2011). The third national education policy, Educating Our Future, which is the current educational policy document has made reference to the involvement of NGOs in the education sector. As the Ministry of Education in Zambia outlines, “An overall objective of national policy in education is to establish new and revitalized partnerships, involving all providers of education and all levels: partnerships between the Ministry of Education and other government ministries; partnerships between the Government and non-governmental organizations...” (Ministry of Education, 1996:134). However, it may be argued that partnership between NGOs and government is rhetoric as the policy does not state the exact role and responsibilities of NGOs in the education sector and there are no policies to guide and facilitate this partnership. As a result the relations between government and NGOs are based on the discretion of government.

##### b) Types of relationships between NGOs and government

In conversations and interviews it became apparent that NGOs were of the view that the relationship between government and NGOs varies, from collaboration, competition and at times conflict depending on the nature of the issue being discussed or programmes being

implemented. The findings of this research suggest that the nature of relationship between NGOs and government depends on the nature of programmes being implemented and also on the specific NGO itself. The relationship between NGOs who are involved in service delivery (e.g. school construction, provision of teaching and learning materials) such as Tona and Nona has been close in the sense that the government collaborates closely with these NGOs.

Additionally, some NGOs such as Tona have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the government. This has helped in enhancing collaboration between government and Tona. The preamble of the MoU reads: ‘This Memorandum of Understanding seeks to establish the collaborative relationship between Ministry of Education in Zambia, herein referred to as MOE and ..., herein referred to as ..., with regard the implementation of programmes aimed at accelerating participation of girls and women in education at all levels’ (Unpublished Internal document, 2004:2). For example, Tona worked closely with the government through the Ministry of Education in developing the 2004 ‘Guidelines for the implementation of the Re-entry Policy’ (Field notes, 2011). The Re-entry Policy allows school girls who fall pregnant to return to school after delivery, as mentioned already. This Policy was formulated because it was observed that teenage pregnancies were one of the major factors that hindered girls from continuing with their education.

On the other hand, there seem to be tensions between government and those NGOs which do not provide services in schools but are involved only in advocacy. Advocacy NGOs were of the view that the government regarded them as competitors. Some NGO officers said the following:

- *The government sometimes views NGOs as competitors* (International NGO officer 9, 5/01/2011).

- *Those NGOs which are involved in advocacy are looked at as being in opposition by the government. When you are involved in advocacy, one is not taking over the role of the government but complementing the government in addressing the needs of its people. Besides, when you are involved in advocacy, it does not mean that you are being critical of the government for nothing but you are trying to make it to account for what it said, it will do (International NGO officer 8, 25/12/2010).*
- *The government feels uncomfortable especially the top officials at the Ministry of Education headquarters but we have tried as much as possible to work closely with the government at the district level. We have worked well with the District Education Board Secretary's offices in our operational areas. We believe we are not in competition with the government (International NGO officer 9, 5/01/ 2011).*
- *Sometimes the Ministry of Education is not happy with the things that we say (National NGO Officer 3, 7/12/ 2010).*

Generally, NGOs were of the view that the government was not comfortable working with NGOs particularly when NGOs become critical of its work and actions. Interviews with government officials did not express sceptical attitude towards an advocacy and social mobilisation role of NGOs in the education sector.

But one Ministry of Education official expressed her dissatisfaction with NGOs. She said: 'The problem with NGOs is that they come to meetings with their own agendas. For example, Zona<sup>9</sup> condemns the Ministry of Education most times'.

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9. Pseudonym used for confidentiality purposes

This is because of the advocacy role that Zona undertakes. The changing role of NGOs working in the education sector in Zambia from a traditional service provision role to take on a policy advocacy role appears to have created tensions between the Ministry of Education and NGOs. The Ministry of Education in Zambia seems to have been taken by surprise by the new roles NGOs are assuming mainly because they involve asking the Ministry of Education to account for its activities, for example, the budget tracking and monitoring that ZANEC undertakes which requires the Ministry of Education to account how funds are allocated and utilised within the ministry. Additionally, sometimes the relationship between government and NGOs is based on suspicion and mistrust. This is because the majority of NGOs depend on foreign aid. These research findings are consistent with Najam (2004)'s conceptual framework for NGO-Government relations. He identified four different types of relationships: cooperation, where government and NGOs share similar ends and means; confrontation, where the ends and means of both actors differ; complementarity, where the ends are similar but the means differ; and co-optation, where the means are similar, but the actors have different ends in mind.

c) Factors determining the strength of the relationship between NGOs and government

There are a number of factors influencing the strength of the relationship between government and NGOs that can be drawn from the findings of this research. First, generally, this depends on the extent to which they are dependent on each other (for example, NGOs are dependent on government resources and infrastructure, and the government seems to depend on service delivery provided by NGOs such as financial support given to girls in order to promote girls' education) to achieve its stated goals. Second, Zambia is a democratic country which has encouraged politicians to be accountable to the electorate, and therefore, the

involvement of other stakeholders such as NGOs in the education sector. Third, is the extent to which government provision is falling short of achieving EFA and national goals (for example, provision of education to vulnerable and disadvantaged children such as orphans, and filling gaps in quality of government provision).

#### 5.1.9. NGOs and Donor Priorities

##### a) Working with NGOs by Donors

Donor representatives interviewed for this study regarded NGOs as important development partners in improving access to education. Donors considered NGOs to be efficient and flexible. One Donor representative stated: “*NGOs are efficient and intervene in meeting the needs of the poor in ways that the government is not able to, for example, an NGO can build a school faster than a government would do because of the bureaucracy in government*” (Donor representative 4, 2011).

These research findings indicate that international donors usually work in three methods with local NGOs: (i) they provide funds directly to local NGOs (for example, Irish Aid funds Zona); ii) they provide funds to an international NGO who in turn works through local NGOs (for example, education projects implemented by Oxfam); and (iii) donors finance projects through the government but make it obligatory to involve NGOs in the delivery of the project. Table 15 below shows that most NGOs in Zambia are financed by international donors.

**Table 15: Case Study NGOs and their sources of funding**

	<b>NGO</b>	<b>Sources of funding</b>
1	Sona	Australian Aid
2	Pona	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, United States Agency for International Development and other private donors
3	Kola	Australian Aid
4	Tona	The Netherlands
5	Lala	Save the Children Sweden, Save the Children Norway
6	Shaba	UNESCO
7	Nona	USAID, UNICEF, Oxfam
8	Zona	Irish Aid, Save the Children, Oxfam

As it will be seen in greater detail below, this research revealed that donor priorities have influenced NGO programmes. In the meantime, it is important to give examples from the Case Study NGOs: Sona provides assistance to children in community schools and is funded by the Australian Aid whose aid programme is to help more children to attend school; Pona's programmes and activities are financed by a broad base of donors as indicated in Table 15 above and whose mission is to promote children's rights' including education. Pona also promotes children's rights' including education; Kola which is also funded by the Australian Aid works in local communities by providing funding to vulnerable families as a way of empowerment to enable them to pay school fees for their children and other school requirements; Lala is supporting children's rights in schools and is funded by Save the Children which focuses on child rights governance and child protection; Shaba provides



literacy and skills training to rural communities and is funded by UNESCO which focuses on improving literacy; Nona provides support to vulnerable children in community schools and among its funders is USAID whose strategy is to fund NGOs to assist vulnerable children to obtain education in their own communities; and the Irish Aid and the Netherlands embassy assist NGOs to advocate for educational policies that support the achievement of Education for All and are funding Zona and Tona respectively. As it was seen earlier, Zona and Tona lobby and advocate for educational policies with the view of ensuring the achievement of Education for All.

It is important to mention that like NGOs, the government of Zambia, depends on foreign funding to undertake its developmental activities. In many cases, donors fund a significant portion of the education budgets - 43 percent of the Zambian primary recurrent education budget was externally funded in 2005 (UNESCO, 2005). External aid was US \$ 754 million in 2002, and US \$ 652.0 million in 2005 (Ministry of Education, 2007:13). Table 16 below shows external aid inflows received by the government of Zambia from 2002 to 2005.

**Table 16:** External Aid Inflows (US millions), 2002-2005

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Budget Support	311.0	58.8	64.8	153.7
Grants	81.9	38.9	44.1	129.7
Loans	229.1	19.9	20.7	24.0
Project Support	443.1	347.6	455	498.3
<b>Total Inflows</b>	754.1	406.4	519.8	652.0

**Source:** Ministry of Education (2007:14)

## b) Sustainability of NGO projects/programmes

NGO officers and donor representatives interviewed expressed the lack of sustainability of NGO projects/programmes. For example:

- *We receive funding from donors outside the country such as Australian Aid. Most of the work that we do involves implementing projects. The lifespan of these projects depends on the availability of funds. The projects end when funding is no longer available* (International NGO officer 7, 2010).
- *NGOs depend on external resources which make them very vulnerable. Their programmes are not sustainable* (Donor representative 2, 2011).
- *The challenge that NGOs face is that they depend on donor aid as a result their projects are not sustainable. Most of the activities that NGOs conduct are project-oriented, therefore, when the donors stop funding a particular project, that project ‘dies’. There is lack of sustainability of projects. For example, a funder will come and provide funding just for one year so that an NGO can sponsor vulnerable children to school. As an organisation, you assist these children to be enrolled in school and fees are paid for them. Then after a year, that funder pulls out. Already these children have been sponsored for a year, ‘what happens in the following years?’* (National NGO Officer 5, 2010).

One wonders why donors do not make NGO programmes sustainable since they are their funders. One also wonders if it is a way to make NGOs “dance to the tune” of donors and other International Financial Institutions. It must be noted that this study found that funding is particularly more of a challenge for local NGOs than the international NGOs. All the local NGO officers interviewed cited insufficient funding as a major constraint and many of them

rely on external resources. An international NGO officer confirmed by stating: “Local NGOs have the challenge of funding.”

c) Conditionalities

This research found that donor priorities have affected NGO programmes. NGO officers complained that donor funding has conditions attached to it. For example:

- *We follow what donors say. We just have to follow their conditions. We have to follow the contract that we signed with them when receiving the funds. This is a problem! Let's say donors give us 20 million kwacha<sup>10</sup> to sponsor girls' education and then as an organisation we decide to include a boy, this becomes a problem with the donor.*

*This will not be accepted by the donor (NGO Officer 6, 2011).*

- *As an organisation our work is based on “Activity based budgets”. Therefore, if there is any money remaining after doing a certain activity and we feel we can invest the money in another activity, then we have to ask the donor if we can use the money for that activity but of course, it has to be in line with the objectives of the organisation (CSO Officer 2, 2011).*

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10. 20 million Kwacha is equivalent to £2500

Many NGOs in education are not directly funded by government but NGO programmes have largely been funded by foreign aid agencies. Due to dependence on donor aid, NGO education activities tend to be aligned to donor education priorities and goals. This is an important finding and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Moreover, sustainability of NGO programmes beyond project life and donor funding has been one of the major challenges faced by NGOs in Zambia.

#### **5.1.10. How NGO engagement in education policy has affected education provision**

##### **a) NGOs and access to education**

NGOs have supported the Free Primary Education policy that was pronounced by the late Republican President, Mr Levy Patrick Mwanawasa in 2002. The Ministry of Education Circular No. 3, 2002 reads:

... the Republican President, His Excellency Mr Levy Patrick

Mwanawasa SC, has announced the introduction of Free Education at

grades 1 to 7 with effect from this year...It therefore goes without saying

that implementation of free education is the best vehicle for promoting

inclusion nationwide and ensuring that no child is denied an opportunity

to attend for failure to meet school costs (Ministry of Education, 2002).

Interviewees from NGOs revealed that NGOs have played a role in sensitising the local communities about the Free Primary Education Policy. This has encouraged parents to send

children to school. However, the implementation of the Free Basic Education policy is not being done well as parents are still required to pay other fees such as Parent Teachers' Association fees (This is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter).

Some NGOs are involved in service provision. For example, FAWEZA is running what is called mobile/transit classes in public basic schools to cater for the orphans and other vulnerable children. FAWEZA pays school fees for those children in mobile classes, buys school uniforms, supplies teaching and learning materials for them and pays allowances to the teachers who teach those children. In my visits to schools in Lusaka province I found that FAWEZA was paying school fees for 31 pupils at Chibolya basic school, 62 pupils at Kalingalinga basic school in Lusaka urban and 8 female pupils at Kampekete basic school in Lusaka rural (Fieldwork, 2011).

Zambia Open Community Schools' (ZOCS) is running community schools in Lusaka and Central provinces of Zambia. For example, Linda open community school supported by ZOCS started in 1994, and the number of pupils has increased over the years (Field notes, 19/01/2011).

**Table 17:** Enrolment Levels at Linda Open Community School

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2009	703	742	<b>1445</b>
2008	580	573	<b>1053</b>
2007	557	571	<b>1028</b>
1995	90	110	<b>200</b>
1994	60	90	<b>150</b>

**Source:** School registers at Linda Open Community School

Interviews with teachers including focus group discussions with community members revealed the following:

- *ZOCS has helped in the growth and development of this school. It normally helps us to find donors to construct classroom blocks. For example, UNICEF built 2 classroom blocks (Teacher 1, School 5, 2011).*
- *This classroom labelled room 8 that you are seeing was built by ZOCS and UNICEF constructed 2 classroom blocks. The library is under construction with the assistance of ZOCS (Community member, 2011).*

Community schools have contributed to improving access to Basic education in Zambia. The Ministry of Education (2006:1) notes that from 2000 to 2005, community schools increased by 245% according to the official MOE figures, constituting 29.57% of all Basic schools in Zambia; pupils enrolled in community schools represent 13.87% of all pupils in Grades 1 to 7

and 0.90% in Grades 8 and 9 in Zambia; for every 3 Basic Schools in Zambia, there is 1 community school. For every 7 pupils in Basic school, 1 attends a community school; and with community school participation, National Enrolment Rate improved by 15.46% and Gross Enrolment Rate by 15.65% for Grades 1 to 7 (Ministry of Education, 2006:1). Indeed, community schools have contributed significantly to the overall increase in enrolment. However, the increase in enrolments has led to overcrowded classrooms resulting in high pupil-teacher ratio especially in urban areas. For community schools, this is a serious problem as the majority of schools are understaffed and have poorly trained teachers. This study found that community schools rely on voluntary teachers who are not trained or have not received adequate teacher training.

In this study, some Ministry of Education officials claimed that access to education at the basic school level was no longer an issue as it has being addressed adequately. However, while primary school enrolments have significantly increased in the recent past in Zambia, interviews with NGO officers, community members, headteachers and teachers revealed that there are some children of school going age who do not have access to education. Here are the statements from NGO officers, community members, headteachers and teachers:

- *Not all the children are able to access education especially in rural areas (International NGO officer 6, 2011).*
- *Vulnerable children are unable to go to school due to financial challenges (National NGO officer 5, 2010).*
- *In this community, there are many children of school going age who do not go to school (Community member, 2011).*

- *Not every child is able to access education due to lack of space. We are always receiving many children wanting to enrol but because of inadequate infrastructure we turn them down as we cannot accommodate everyone (Headteacher, School 7, 2011).*
- *Some children stop school on their own, while some drop-out because of being unable to pay school fees (Teacher 1, School 1, 2011).*

This study found that in Zambia, a significant number of children are unable to complete 9 years of the Basic education cycle, with dropout from school caused by both demand-side factors related to cost and labour demands, and supply-side factors affecting distance from school and of quality. These research findings indicate that children who cannot access education include vulnerable children whose parents cannot afford to pay school fees, girls who drop-out of school because of pregnancies and early marriages, and girls as well as boys who cannot cover long distances to get to school especially in rural areas. Government basic schools are not affordable for the poor despite offering ‘free education’ at the primary school level. Government schools also include many indirect costs such as PTA fees which the poor are unable to afford, as earlier stated above. Thus, in spite of NGOs’ efforts in providing education, there are children who still do not have access to education.

In Zambia, policy-makers have limited their attention to enrolment rates. However, it is clear that access to school is not sufficient to ensure a productive level of basic learning. In order to have a decent level of basic learning, quantity and quality have to go hand in hand as ensuring education quality is an essential complement to enrolment. I now turn to NGO contribution to quality education with regards to Basic education in Zambia.



## b) NGOs and quality of education

The quality of education in the majority of schools in Zambia is poor. The quality of education as measured, by test and examination results, is still low in Zambia. As de Kemp, Elbers and Gunning (2008:14) point out, “Zambia does poorly in comparison to neighbouring countries. Approximately 70 % of the grade 5 pupils do not attain the minimum level of English, whereas no more than 6 % actually achieve the required level”.

Some NGOs are assisting the government to implement the Basic Education policy by donating textbooks to schools with a view of improving quality.

What was evident as I conducted my investigations was that the quality of education in Zambia is low and falling. The problem of low achievement levels in the majority of schools in Zambia was raised by the majority of stakeholders (95%) interviewed in this study. For example, a community member said:

- *At this school, teachers are not committed. They spend little time in school. They are more concerned with drinking alcohol and ploughing huge pieces of land. A teacher ploughing like a farmer! Where does the teacher find time to do cultivation and then go to school? Most times pupils are left by themselves in class and they write notes on the chalkboard on their own* (Community member, 2011).

The findings from this research indicate that teachers’ salaries are low, therefore, some teachers try to make ends meet by engaging in farming.

However, some parents did not totally blame the teachers for the low achievements of their children in school. Some parents pointed out that some among them did not encourage their children to attend school instead they went out with them to the fields to plough. Additionally, some parents mentioned that some parents in the community did not instil good discipline in their children such that children were involved in beer drinking which affected their performance at school.

Interviews with teachers revealed that the poor performance of pupils was due to overcrowded classrooms (large class sizes) which make marking of exercise books and class management difficult. Also, teaching and learning materials were inadequate. For example, a teacher stated:

*I have 90 pupils in my English class and one core textbook.*

*This is a challenge. Besides, most pupils do not do homework.*

*When they go home, their parents do not help them as some*

*parents do not care while some are illiterate (Teacher 1, School 7,*

*2011).*

Additionally, primary examination results at grade 7 in public schools indicate that the quality of education in Zambia is poor. For example, Table 18 below shows that at school 7, a total of 289 pupils sat for the grade 7 examinations but only 58 were selected to grade 8 in 2009, and in 2010, a total of 282 pupils sat for the grade 7 examinations but only 74 were selected to grade 8.

**Table 18:** Grade 7 Examinations' Results at School 7

Year	No. of Candidates entered		Absent		No. of Candidates sat		Total	No. Of Selected Candidates		Total
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls		Boys	Girls	
2010	161	141	5	15	156	126	282	-	-	74
2009	151	151	7	6	144	145	289	34	24	58
2008	154	150	10	17	144	133	277	30	22	52
2007	150	162	6	18	156	144	300	30	22	52

**Source:** School Examinations' Results Records produced by the school. Based on information from the Ministry of Education, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Indeed, the performance of pupils in national examinations is low which depicts the poor quality of education at this school.

In general and according to research findings, the lack of good quality education in the majority of schools visited (86%) was due to the following reasons:

- lack of trained teachers, especially in community schools, and upper basic school in public basic schools;
- inadequate teaching and learning materials;
- dilapidated and inadequate infrastructure such as shown in figures 2 and 3 below:



**Figure 2: A classroom block with cracked floor (potholes)**



**Figure 3: A classroom with broken windows**

- inadequate and poor sanitary conditions;
- poor learning environment;
- pupil absenteeism;
- teacher absenteeism particularly in rural areas.

This study found that the contribution of NGOs in improving the quality of education in Zambia has been minimal. Many NGOs only contributed textbooks to schools and nothing else thereafter. NGOs need to develop more innovative programmes such as advocating for the provision of sufficient teachers and monitoring student learning and achievement in schools which can contribute significantly to improving the quality of Basic education.

#### 5.1.11. Challenges faced by NGOs in Service Delivery and Advocacy

From field observations and interviews with NGO officers, challenges faced by NGOs were as follows:

##### (i) Insufficient funding

Examples of comments from NGO officers are as follows:

- “*We have scarce finances which makes it difficult for us to provide for our target groups*” (National NGO officer 2, 2010).
- “Because of financial difficulties, we cannot employ adequate staff” (National NGO officer 10, 2011).

This research revealed that there were limited financial resources especially among national NGOs. As mentioned already, most NGO projects are dependent on foreign aid and lack self- sustainability.

##### (ii) Low staffing levels

This study found that there was a small number of staff in most NGOs especially among national NGOs. For example, Shaba had two members of staff- the director of the organisation and the programme manager (Fieldnotes, 2010). This inhibited them from meeting the needs of their clients adequately.

##### (iii) Few advocacy NGOs

Interview and observation data indicate that there were few NGOs involved in advocacy in the education sector in Zambia. This was mainly due to lack of capacity among national and

local NGOs. However, if NGOs are to influence education policy, advocacy and lobbying are important tools that can be used in reaching policy-makers.

(iv) Duplication of work among NGOs

These research findings indicate that there was re-inventing of the wheel among NGOs in Zambia due to poor networking. NGO respondents felt that there was mistrust and lack of cooperation among national NGOs that are in similar or related fields, making it difficult to forge effective partnerships and networks. For example, an NGO officer said:

*NGO work in Zambia is fragmented because most NGOs do not share information on their activities. As a result, some NGOs are literally doing the same programmes as other NGOs even when they do not have the competency to do them. For example, some NGOs are involved in psychosocial counselling of children even when they are not competent to do it. There is lack of specialisation among most NGOs working in the education sector (National NGO Officer 5, 2010).*

Duplication of work among NGOs has led to wastage of resources thereby hampering the channelling of resources to areas where children need education.

In summary, these research findings indicate that service provision and policy advocacy are the roles that NGOs play in Basic Education policy reform in Zambia. The next chapter discusses these two important roles in greater detail thereby examining the contributions of

NGOs to Basic education development and challenges of NGOs in service provision and policy advocacy.



## CHAPTER 6

### **Analysis and Discussion of the Participation of NGOs in Education Policy at the Basic Education Level in Zambia (1)**

#### **6.0. Introduction**

This research has indicated that NGOs are service providers and policy advocates in the education sector. However, it was seen in the previous chapter that NGOs cannot play these roles in isolation because their relations with government and donors are important in the achievement of EFA goals. For decades NGOs have partnered with governments to co-support the development of Basic education in many developing countries especially after the Jomtien International Education Conference. It has been seen that since the 1990s, many- especially large - NGOs in Africa have entered the arena of advocacy and policy dialogue with government and international agencies in the education sector (Takala and Doftori, 2007). The roles of NGOs and their relations with government and donors encourage further discussion and analysis. The discussion is done in two parts- chapter 6 and chapter 7. These chapters address the main research question: *‘Does the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform enhance the achievement of EFA in Lusaka Province of Zambia?’*

Chapter 6 focuses on the contributions of NGOs to the education sector. The discussion begins by exploring the work of NGOs in Zambia in relation to education delivery. This is followed by NGO advocacy and lobbying in the education sector in Zambia. A discussion on NGOs and education policy will follow. This section examines the means which enable NGOs to participate in education policy-making and how they participate in the

implementation of education policy. The significant impact on policy decisions in Zambia by NGOs forms the second part of this section where the influence of NGOs on policy issues in Zambia is discussed.

Chapter 7 then discusses NGOs and their relations with government and donors. Access and quality issues in Basic Education in Zambia, the effect of market-driven policies on education in Zambia, and NGOs and the achievement of EFA in Zambia are also discussed.

### **6.1. The work of NGOs in Zambia in relation to education delivery**

It is evident from research findings presented in the previous chapter that educational NGOs in Zambia are responsive to local people's needs. All community respondents acknowledged that NGO activities do respond to their needs. This is clearly exemplified under specific interventions (and as presented in chapter 5) such as supporting infrastructural development in schools. The question, however, on whether this responsiveness to local community educational needs is effective in meeting the educational needs of those in poverty with regards to access and quality in education requires attention. I now turn to consider these issues in detail.

Although NGOs have played a significant role in education delivery in Zambia by providing school fees, school uniforms, textbooks and other learning materials to schoolchildren; providing shelters to girls near schools to prevent them from travelling long distances to get to school; empowering some parents by assisting them with funds to engage in income generating activities so that they can support their children in school; and supporting and running community schools, problems of access, retention and quality in education have continued. Indeed, the problem of access to schooling especially at grades 8 and 9 (upper basic school level) have continued in Zambia. This is because most parents cannot afford to pay school fees for their children and NGOs support only a small number of children.

The research findings revealed that the number of children supported by NGOs was small mainly being due to inadequate funding. It was noted in the previous chapter that in 2010 FAWEZA was paying school fees for only 31 pupils at Chibolya basic school which had a total enrolment of 2, 431 pupils, and 8 pupils at Kampekete basic school in Lusaka rural with

a total enrolment of 719 pupils. Additionally, NGO programmes lacked sustainability. For example, a headteacher of one of the basic schools I visited said: “There is too much reliance on donors by NGOs. As a result children supported by NGOs eventually drop out of school when the funding ends” (Headteacher, School E, 2011). Therefore challenges with regards to continuing access remain.

Based on research findings of this study through interviews and focus group discussions, it was clear that the educational needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children were not being met adequately. During interviews, 3 NGO officers said the following:

- *The Ministry of Education is claiming that the net enrolment rate at primary school is hitting 97%. Though the enrolment rate has gone up as it were, there are still problems to do with retention, progression and quality of education in schools (NGO officer 1, 2010).*
- *Not all children are in school due to the following factors: long distance covered to get to school especially for girls in rural areas; early marriages among girls; lack of role models in most of the rural communities to encourage children to attend school; financial difficulties-unable to buy school uniforms and pay fees; and household chores-some children do not go to school in order to help with household tasks or drop-out to help with household chores (NGO officer 2, 2010).*
- *By 2015, not every child of school going age will be in school as presently there are many children who need education but there are few school places. For example, some schools in urban areas are unable to accommodate all children who need education as there is lack of space (NGO officer 4, 2010).*

Similarly, a donor representative said:

*The Ministry of Education is saying that the enrolment rate is 97% now. But as donors we have question marks - based on what census did the Ministry of Education come up with this figure? The figure is not correct. It is not correct to say that Zambia has achieved the EFA goal. When we talk about achieving Universal Primary Education, focusing on access alone is not enough, quality is also a vital issue (Donor representative 2, 2011).*

Apparently, the government of Zambia has reported in its Millennium Development Goals Progress Report 2011 that the primary school net enrolment rate is about 100% (Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2011:vi). Meanwhile, focus group discussions with local community members revealed the following:

*In this village, Mulobola, though we have many vulnerable children, There is only one child that is assisted by an NGO. As a result, some children do not go to school because of lack of school fees (Field notes, Mulobola village, 17/01/2011).*

Indeed, it is clear that not all children of school-age are in school.

Earlier, it was noted in this chapter that some NGOs are involved in supporting community schools and other NGOs run community schools. Community schools are meant to meet the needs of those excluded from formal school (for example, those in remote areas especially in rural areas and street children including the poor). As noted in the previous chapter that community schools aim to improve school attendance and contribute to EFA goals.

However, although community schools provide education to disadvantaged children, the majority of them offer education of a low standard. As a result, rich families or those with an average income do not send their children to community schools as these schools tend to produce poor quality students that perpetuate a system of inequality in the country.

In addition, findings of this research indicate that sometimes NGOs support “wrong targets”. This implies that instead of NGOs providing their services to the disadvantaged and vulnerable children, they have supported children who are not vulnerable at times according to these research findings. Focus group discussions with community members in Chongwe, a rural area in Zambia, revealed that some NGOs provide sponsorship to children whose parents can afford to pay school fees for them. One of the focus group discussion members said: *In this village there is only one child who is being supported by World Vision. Otherwise, most of the children who are being supported financially are children of teachers* (Field notes, Kampekete, 17/01/2011). This view is similar to what the academic commented in my interview with him:

*Despite the work of NGOs, there is no change in people’s livelihoods. This is because NGOs normally target the wrong people. For example, in the area of education, some children who are supported are teachers’ children - these children whose parents can afford to look after them. In this way NGOs are perpetuating poverty ( Academic 1, 2011).*

Interviewees from NGOs indicated that disadvantaged and vulnerable children are identified through school authorities.

These research findings indicate that in terms of geographical coverage, NGOs do not work in all areas of Zambia. They have operational areas. For example, Oxfam works only in community schools and therefore provides funding to those NGOs which have a focus on community schools such as Zambia Open Community Schools. FAWEZA only works in public schools (mainly government schools) and largely supports girls' education. Since NGOs have their own operational or designated areas, they cannot operate anywhere else even if there is a need such as disadvantaged and vulnerable children not been able to access education without donor consent.

This research also showed that even if there is a need in a particular place, if the road network is poor, for example, NGOs normally avoid such a place. Issues of cost to remote places despite the presence of disadvantaged and vulnerable people are a challenge for NGOs. This is because of insufficient finances especially among national NGOs due to their heavy dependence on international donor funding. As Miller-Grandvaux, *et al* (2002) note: "Cost is also an issue for NGOs that aim to provide more than specific services to donors. NGOs usually need a financial base to cover overhead costs and fund their own initiatives. ... donors tend to be less willing to finance the overhead costs of local NGOs" (Miller-Grandvaux, *et al*, 2002: 47). The majority of NGOs in Zambia are located in urban areas and mostly in the capital city, Lusaka. Some NGOs have provincial/regional offices in other parts of Zambia. Therefore, most NGO staff normally travel to rural areas to deliver their services. As Manion (2006) points out, the majority of NGOs in Zambia are urban-based, thus suggesting limited representation of the interests of rural communities and individuals.

Since NGOs have designated places where they operate from they have created what is been termed here as development ‘islands’, constituting groups of the developed and undeveloped. As Amutabi (2006:3) gives the Kenyan experience:

Therefore, there is no doubt that NGOs have contributed tremendously to Kenya’s development and underdevelopment, and that the historicisation of their role can only be evaluated under such binaries and paradoxes. This does not imply that NGO work has been negative through and through. They have often created islands of development in some areas. Indeed, many admit that without NGOs, some monumental development activities would not have been undertaken in some parts of Kenya.

This study showed that INGOs tend to define, more than national NGOs, the kind of NGO educational programmes that exist in Zambia. This is done through funding criteria/requirements (conditionalities) that national NGOs have to adhere to such as focusing on gender issues since INGOs do provide funding to national NGOs. As it was seen in the previous chapter, INGOs receive funding from international donors and in turn channel these funds to national NGOs. INGOs work through national NGOs to implement their programmes.

Moreover, this research revealed that even though NGOs consult communities about the programme activities to undertake in their areas, the final decision on the type of programmes to implement lies in the hands of NGOs. Consultation of community members by NGOs was mainly done to mobilise community support of their programmes. One may argue that in spite of NGO interventions/activities in the communities I visited during my fieldwork, their real needs are not being met as seen by access, equity and quality problems in education.



The issue that featured prominently in the observations of the work of NGOs was their focus on programmes/projects that show immediate results. As a result, the root causes of access, retention, equity and quality problems in education are not tackled as only superficial solutions which show quantitative results are put forward by NGOs in order to show their funders that they are making impact. Miller-Grandvaux, *et al* (2002) note that in trying to secure donor funding NGOs tended to concentrate on projects/programmes that show measurable results as donors want to see results. One academic said:

*Donors are concerned with quick results. Therefore, in order to meet donor requirements NGOs focus on poverty reduction programmes such as livelihoods and not on the quality of education as it is long- term. Sustainable change in education particularly quality issues take a long time to see so NGOs would rather focus on access as one can easily count the number of children in school. In this way, it is easy for NGOs to report back to their donors. Donors often ask NGOs to show impact of NGO projects/programmes. They normally question NGOs like if you are conducting this project, what is the impact? That is the way it is in the NGO world (Academic 1, 2011).*

One may suggest that impact needs to be defined beyond simplistic measures and also needs to be looked at in terms of years rather than months.

This study also found that during the existence of Sector Wide Approaches in Zambia the activities of NGOs have on the whole become better linked to the national education sector programmes/policies. All the NGO officers interviewed in this study stated that they were working in line with national policies. However, one may argue that NGO's primary role of working with the community at the grass-root level and implementing new and innovative approaches of delivering education in situations where current policy has failed to meet educational needs of children may be hindered. The Zambian national education policy as seen in chapter 1, is based on market-driven reforms such as liberalisation and decentralisation. Because of relying on donor funding NGOs have found themselves promoting the market-driven reforms of their funders. According to Edwards and Hulme (1996), as NGOs seek for funding for their projects they move away from community needs and closer to the neo-liberal interventions preferred by many donors. Additionally, NGOs operate on "activity based budgets" or "project based budgets" (i.e., each NGO project has its own budget and no spending on other projects is allowed without the approval of donors) which put them in a difficult situation to respond to educational needs without a go-ahead by their funders. Indeed, donor demands may result in NGOs not meeting the needs of their client communities. One may argue that dependence on external aid does not work in terms of satisfying the local educational needs of access, equity and quality. As one of the African presidents, Rwandan President Kagame in a September 2007 interview with Time Magazine remarked:

Now, the question comes for our donors and partners: having spent so much money, what difference did it make? In the last 50 years, you've spent US \$ 400 billion in aid to Africa. But what is there to show for it? And the donors should ask: what are we doing wrong, or what are the people we are helping

doing wrong? Obviously somebody's not getting something right. Otherwise, you'd have something to show for the money.

The donors have also made a lot of mistakes. Many times they have assumed they are the ones who know what countries in Africa need. They want to be the ones to choose where to put this money, to be the ones to run it, without any accountability. In other cases, they have simply associated with the wrong people and money gets lost and ends up in people's pockets. We should correct that (Time Magazine, 2007:online).

Since donors normally choose where to put their money in the education sector, in most cases without taking into account the local environment, there is usually a mismatch between donor and NGO actions and country and individual needs. These research findings indicate that NGOs in Zambia tend to focus on implementing the education programmes of their international funders. It was noted in chapter 2 that the majority of international aid agencies appear to uphold the neo-liberal agenda of encouraging the creation of a market in education. It has been argued in these chapters that this worsens existing inequalities in education. As we have seen in chapter 2, Olssen (1996) draws our attention to the theoretical underpinnings of neo-liberalism. He explains that neo-liberalism centres on the state's role in creating the appropriate market by providing the conditions, laws and institutions necessary for its operation. One may argue that to assume that the market can solve educational problems in Zambia is unrealistic. As Klees (2002: 23) suggests: "To survive well and equitably requires assuming collective responsibility for our future, not leaving it to some quasi-religious pursuit of "free markets"." Indeed, this calls for NGOs to support policies that cater for the educational needs of every child rather than market-driven policies which exclude others in

their roles as service providers and policy advocates. In the next section, I will examine advocacy and lobbying by NGOs in the education sector in Zambia.

## **6.2. NGO Advocacy and Lobbying in the Education Sector in Zambia**

Advocacy is fairly a new activity for most NGOs in Zambia, and there are very few NGOs concentrating on this area. It is one of the tools NGOs use to reach government. NGOs use advocacy with the view to put pressure on the government to fulfil its commitment to Education for All (Fieldwork, 14/1/2011). This research has noted that among national NGOs, FAWEZA and ZANEC (an umbrella organisation for NGOs) are involved in advocacy and lobbying. FAWEZA was formed in 1996 (FAWE, 2004:4) and ZANEC was established in May, 2001 (ZANEC, 2008: viii).

This research revealed that INGOs working in the education sector in Zambia do not engage in ‘strong’ advocacy with the government. Findings from interviews with some of INGO officers show that INGOs in Zambia find it difficult to engage in ‘strong’ advocacy because of their non-national status. As shown in the previous chapter, the findings chapter, when there is an issue in the education sector that INGOs are not happy about, they have to choose their words when speaking to the government for fear of being told off that they are a foreign organisation and dependent upon foreign funding. They normally give general statements where they have to talk and take a non-confrontational approach.

The findings of this study indicate that INGOs have chosen to work through local and national NGOs to do advocacy. INGO’s interest in advocacy is growing with the view of improving governance and strengthening civil society.

However, as already pointed out, there are few educational NGOs in Zambia involved in advocacy. Based on interviews with donor representatives and NGO officers, this was

because of costs and lack of capacity among the majority of NGOs. NGO officers were of the view that costs associated with conducting advocacy work discouraged them from doing advocacy and instead opted for service delivery. These research findings indicate that the majority of NGOs in Zambia depend on foreign donor funding, however, this aid is not always available. As a result NGOs especially local NGOs have financial difficulties. For example, interviewees from NGOs said:

- *Local NGOs have the challenge of funding” (INGO officer 1, 2010).*
- *As an NGO, we are struggling financially. When this organisation started in 1994, there used to be 3 programme managers but now because of financial constraints, I am the only one left as others had to leave the organisation. As a result, we are unable to conduct some of our activities (National NGO Officer 3, 2010).*

However, donor representatives were of the view that NGOs can still conduct less expensive advocacy activities such as holding meetings with government policy-makers.

In interviews, both NGO and donor representatives mentioned that capacity problem among NGOs accounted to having few advocacy NGOs in Zambia. This study found that most NGOs lacked expertise in the area of advocacy. As a consequence, they did not move more confidently into advocacy roles. The issue of capacity problem among NGOs also came out in my interview with one of the Ministry of Education officials. She observed that except for the few prominent NGOs, the majority of them did not actively participate in the discussions with Ministry of Education officials and other stakeholders during meetings.

One may suggest that a remedy to the capacity problem of local and national NGOs is needed if they are to move more confidently into advocacy work. I argue that effective advocacy involves research and policy analysis which require training. Therefore, one may argue that capacity-building of NGOs is justified as the means to bring the voices of disadvantaged groups to bear on educational policy-making, planning and management in Zambia.

As Eade (1997:24) explains:

Thus capacity building is an approach to development not something separate from it. It is a response to the multi-dimensional processes of change... In supporting organisations working for social justice, it is also necessary to support the various capacities they require to this: intellectual, organisational, social, political, cultural, material, practical or financial.

This research found that apart from the lack of expertise among NGOs to conduct advocacy, there was also lack of a strong advocacy voice in the education sector in Zambia. The majority of CSOs including NGOs in Zambia involved in civic education and other politically focused activities were most active prior to and just following the shift to a multi-party system in the 1990s (Manion, 2006). Over the years, as indicated in interviews with donor representatives and academics revealed that the strength of NGO voice has reduced. The findings of this study indicate that this was due to the following factors: capacity problem among the majority of NGOs; little experience in advocacy roles among NGOs, fear of losing jobs among some NGO members; and negative attitudes of government officials at times.

Capacity problem among most of the NGOs dealing in education in Zambia has hindered the majority of them from taking on advocacy roles. For example, donor representatives expressed the following concerns with regards to NGO capacity in advocacy:

- *In Zambia, the majority of NGOs lack expertise in the area of advocacy. They do not quite understand what advocacy means. When we are talking about advocacy, ‘what is it that we are really looking at?’*” (Donor representative 1, 2011).
- *The capacity of NGOs should be strengthened. Most NGOs are project implementers and only few have developed capacity in research, lobbying and advocacy* (Donor representative 2, 2011).
- *In Zambia, there are good NGOs but are not yet at a standard to have a critical dialogue with the government* (Donor representative 2, 2011).

This is in consistent with what NGO officers said:

- *Sometimes we don’t do advocacy per se but we only make the Ministry of Education aware that there is such a problem* (INGO Officer 7, 2010).
- *In meetings, some NGO officers are quiet through-out but in order to influence policy decisions, one has to talk. Some NGOs lack confidence and other skills* (CSO officer 2, 2010).

One may suggest that NGOs need to be more persuasive in their advocacy work if they have to significantly influence policy reform.

A Ministry of Education official also expressed dissatisfaction with some NGOs’ lack of contribution in meetings with government officials and other stakeholders. She said:



*For example, when we were discussing the Education Bill, Some NGOs did not contribute anything. Well, the Education Bill document is big, and most NGOs did not read the entire document. What we have found is that when we are discussing policy issues some NGOs do not contribute - they are quiet because they lack skills as the language that is used in these policy documents is technical (Ministry of Education official 5, 2011).*

As Packalen (2007:22) points out:

In the complex setting of broad and long-term development frameworks and program aid, policy making is increasingly restricted to those who have high-level technical knowledge and skills and whose decisions are unconstrained by political processes.

Thus, the technical language used in policy documents contributes to lack of a strong advocacy voice in the Education Sector in Zambia as most NGO staff do not understand the language.

Field observations showed that sometimes government officials display negative attitudes towards NGOs as partners in development. This undoubtedly discourages some NGOs from taking on advocacy roles. In 2011, the then Minister of Education, Dora Siliya, who is also the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) spokesperson, in an interview with QFM radio when she was asked why the government had remained quiet over NGOs' enquiries,

particularly, when Transparency Zambia asked her to tell the nation if the MMD party was also involved in the plot (land) saga. This was when it was found that the Patriotic Front party (an opposition party that time, February 2011) councillors were selling land amongst themselves illegally. She said: *“Responding to NGOs is giving them more room than they deserve”*. (MMD spokesperson/Minister of Education, Dora Siliya, QFM radio, 6pm News, 7/02/2011). This shows how the government does not want to give more space to NGOs to intervene in issues with regards to government decision-making.

Based on interviews with NGO officers, some NGO members fear to speak out strongly or to give divergent opinions when things are going wrong in the education sector for fear of losing jobs. An NGO interviewee said: *“Most of the members of FAWWEZA work for the Ministry of Education, therefore, when there is a negative issue they don’t come out strongly. It is a question of ‘bread and butter’ as people fear of losing jobs. They protect their jobs”*. This shows conflict of interest. However, I must be quick to mention here that this situation was only found at one national NGO, the other national NGOs stated that they are able to speak freely without any intimidation from government.

The political environment in Zambia appears conducive for NGOs to undertake their activities. However, there have been signs of government anxiety, when NGOs are perceived as ‘going too far’. Hachonda (2004) draws our attention to the former President of Zambia Frederick Chiluba who in 1996 accused some NGOs of only working in the interests of their foreign funders, which was harmful to the nation. He notes that the former President of Zambia Chiluba remarked: ‘We must have regulatory systems in place to ensure that Zambia does not become a breeding ground for ‘mercenaries’. We have to know who funds these NGOs in order to ensure our internal safety’ (Hachonda, 2004:131).

Interviews with NGO officers revealed that, on occasion, there is mistrust between NGOs and the government. For example, ZANEC, an umbrella organisation for NGOs, involved in advocacy, has a challenge because it has never done and does not do service delivery such as school construction in the education sector, so it is difficult for people to see what it is doing. For FAWEZA, it is on an advantageous position as it does service delivery such as paying school fees for vulnerable children apart from its advocacy role, therefore, people are able to see what it is doing. One may suggest that FAWEZA should capitalise on its strength. It is not only NGOs in Zambia facing such challenges but NGOs in other countries have similar challenges. Takala and Doftori (2007) give an example of their research in Nepal on the role of NGOs in the context of Education Sector programmes. Their findings indicated that unlike NGOs which had a good history in educational service delivery for the marginalised groups, NGOs which were active in advocacy and social mobilisation without prior experience in educational service delivery were regarded with suspicion by government.

The findings in this research through field observations have revealed that some NGOs had made submissions to the Zambian parliament with regards to access and equity issues in Basic education including the plight of community schools. This is in trying to make their voices heard to policy-makers. However, in education policy-making donors have tended to work with high level technocrats and civil society and not with politicians. As Packalen (2007:32):

A notable feature of SWAp has been the marginal role of democratic institutions, especially parliaments. Parliament is not the only forum for democratic participation. Parliament is, however, a key institution in a democracy and in its capacity as legislative authority could be in a central

position in decision-making concerning e.g. national education policies. In practice, the situation often looks very different. In the sector program context, other forms of participation have been emphasised at the cost of representative democratic structures.

Packalen (2007) further notes that the parliament may simply have been forgotten or seen as a pressure group by donors. Therefore, it is unlikely that the submissions made to parliament by NGOs will be taken into consideration at all since donors are the main drivers of policy-making in Zambia.

It was noted in the previous chapter that NGOs in Lusaka province of Zambia used advocacy activities in order to influence education policy making and implementation. I now turn to NGOs and Education Policy in Zambia.

### **6.3. NGOs and Education Policy in Zambia**

#### **6.3.1. Participation in Education Policy**

The findings of this research indicate that NGOs working in the Education sector in Lusaka province of Zambia are involved in Education policy-making and implementation. Firstly, this study has found that for the local and national NGOs, there is the Sector Advisory Group (SAG) and for international NGOs, the Project Coordination Committee which enable them to interface with government and other stakeholders in education policy. As indicated in the previous chapter, the SAG only meets twice or three times a year. It can be argued that for NGOs to be able to influence policy decisions effectively two or three SAG meetings in a year are not adequate. This is because the education sector is one of the biggest sectors in Zambia and there are always issues arising and of course the education system is already facing educational problems and challenges which will be discussed later in this chapter which need solutions. One may suggest that holding regular policy discussion meetings can assist in finding solutions to educational problems and challenges.

Secondly, this study found that invitation letters are sent to NGOs by the government through the Ministry of Education when there is a policy issue which needs discussion. The government decides which NGOs to invite. It can be argued that there is a risk that the government may invite only the “well-behaving” NGOs to participate in consultations to formally legitimise the process because of donor pressure to do so.

This research highlights that, while NGOs are involved in formal policy dialogue primarily through an umbrella organisation, there is limited evidence of ‘real’ dialogue, and hence of

influence in practice. These research findings indicate that NGOs are not extensively consulted by the government as most often consultations are done merely to elicit for ideas or as a formality. The feeling among NGOs was that although they acknowledge participation in education policy formulation, their participation dwindles as the process advances. It was indicated that their participation is more limited to elementary processes and for more general issues while main and specific decisions about the policy are still a preserve of the government. Therefore, one may suggest that there is usually tokenistic dialogue<sup>11</sup> between government and NGOs. This approach to dialogue appears to be beneficial to the government, especially where this attracts donor support to sector development plans. However, tokenistic dialogue seems to have at best little benefit for NGOs, and in fact threatens their ability to operate free of interference.

With regards to implementation, as seen already, NGOs have been involved in the implementation of the Basic Education Policy Reform by contributing to Basic education development in school construction, paying school fees for school children and providing teaching and learning resources such as of textbooks and desks.

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11. The practice of making only a symbolic effort at policy discussions between government and NGOs, particularly in order to meet the requirements of international donors.

### 6.3.2. NGOs' Significant impact on Policy Decisions in Zambia

It is evident from the research findings that the majority of NGOs in Zambia have made limited impact on policy decisions. Of the 8 NGOs covered in the study, only 4 NGOs said that they had made impact, among them was an international NGO which worked through a national CSO, ZANEC. Therefore, the impact can be attributed to this CSO which carried out its activities though part of its funding comes from this international NGO.

In spite of NGOs' existence in Zambia since the 1990s for the majority of them and 1980s for some, there is only one tangible policy in place which is as a result of NGO influence. This is the re-entry policy which was put in place due to NGO pressure on government, spearheaded by FAWEZA as noted in the findings chapter. The re-entry policy allows girls who fall pregnant to return to school after delivery. Indeed, one might suggest that NGOs have had limited impact on policy decisions in Zambia. This could be due to the following reasons: few NGOs are involved in advocating policy change, and the methods that NGOs use to influence education policy are insufficient as the use of research and other knowledge for policy formulation in education is relatively low.

These research findings indicate that NGOs did not play a role in influencing and shaping the present (official) education policy, *Educating Our Future* which was formulated in 1996. This is because, as noted in the findings chapter, in 1996 most NGOs were new on the scene, were few and had not gained prominence yet. The government through the Ministry of Education just invited civil society in general without taking any considerations as to whether NGOs were present or not for stakeholders' policy consultation meetings. Academics played a great

role in the formulation of Educating our Future as it was a result of evaluation studies. As Takala (1998:330) notes:

The current national education policy document of Zambia (Educating our Future=EOF, 1996) was prepared over a period of more than two years through a process of numerous successive drafts. Like the Focus on Learning report, also the current policy document is based on studies (funded by the World Bank and other donor agencies) of the various policy issues and on consultation with stakeholder groups.

Nevertheless, these research findings show that NGOs have been involved in the production of strategic plans such as the Ministry of Education Strategic Plan (2003-2007), National Development Plans i.e. the Fifth National Development Plan (2005-2010), the Sixth National Development Plan (2010-2015), and National Implementation Frameworks. As indicated in the findings chapter, NGOs have influenced the government to have a focus on EFA targets and MDGs in its educational documents but one may not rule out the influence of international Conferences, Jomtien and Dakar, held in 1990 and 2000 respectively. The government of Zambia has signed a series of international human rights agreements. Notable among these are: the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; the Convention on Rights of the Child; the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Ministry of Education, 2009). The right to education impresses upon the government of Zambia to take steps to progressively realise that right. Like other



human rights, it has a particular concern with the disadvantaged, vulnerable, and poor groups (this is explained in detail later in this chapter).

Generally, therefore, one might state that the involvement of NGOs in education policy is determined by their interactions with the government. Since, policy is the main domain of the government, NGOs cannot ignore the government. The next chapter examines and discusses the relationship between government and NGOs. Thereafter, access and quality issues in Basic education in Zambia, the effect of market-driven policies on education in Zambia, and NGOs and the achievement of EFA in Zambia are discussed.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Analysis and Discussion of the Participation of NGOs in Education Policy at the Basic Education Level in Zambia (2)**

#### **7.0. Introduction**

In continuation from the previous chapter, this chapter examines and analyses the participation of NGOs in Education Policy at the Basic Education level in Zambia in light of the research findings presented in chapter 5. It was seen that Government-NGO relations in Zambia are central to policy formulation. An analysis of these relations constitutes the first section of this chapter. Donor-NGO relations are also important and these will be discussed in the second section. This will be followed by an examination of the roles of NGOs and government in the much-used Sector-Wide Approaches. Access and quality issues in Basic education in Zambia will follow. This will lead into a discussion of the effect of market-driven policies on education in Zambia. As it can be seen in this chapter, reliance on international aid in Zambia has influenced the country to embrace donor-driven policies of neoliberalism. These policies have had negative effects on the lives of people and on the education sector. NGOs and the achievement of EFA in Zambia will constitute the last section of the chapter.

### 7.1. Government and NGO Relations in Zambia

It can be seen that governments especially from developing countries tend to control all public affairs of life. As Miller-Grandvaux, *et al* (2002:6) write:

Governments generally believe that it is their legitimate right and responsibility to control everything that happens in the country. Although government personnel often talk about partnerships with NGOs, they believe that the relationship *should* be government regulating NGOs.

The findings of this research indicate that the Government of the Republic of Zambia has firm control over education. When NGOs work in the education sector, they are required to seek permission from the government in order to carry out their activities. Interviews with NGO officers revealed that in 2010 some NGOs received a circular from the government advising them not to undertake any interventions/programmes in public schools without the permission of the government through the Ministry of Education. One interviewee from an NGO commented: *“We are thankful to the government. We don’t know what we would have done if the government had not allowed us to work in schools”*. Apparently, this NGO works in public schools. In one of the field visits, for example, I and some NGO staff had to pass through the Ministry of Education District Education Office to request permission from the District Education Board Secretary to visit the schools in order to check/monitor NGO building projects, after which there is almost no interaction between the NGO and the Ministry of Education District Education Office. Actually, there is little interaction between NGOs and Ministry of Education structures. Though the situation is worse off between NGOs

and the Ministry of Education headquarters where there is very minimal interaction between the two. As a result, there is lack of collaboration between government and NGOs which has partly contributed to the failure by NGOs to scale up their programmes by getting government to adopt some of their programmes. Lack of collaboration has also contributed to the poor state of relations between government and some NGOs characterised by misgivings about the intentions of NGOs by government and failure to recognise NGOs as credible development partners. For example, a Ministry of Education official felt that some NGOs when they are invited for policy discussions by government only came to condemn the work done by government. She said: *“Except for NGO A and NGO B which are helpful to the government, NGO X comes to meetings to condemn most times”* (Ministry of Education official 5, 2011). The feeling among NGOs was that the government was neglecting its role in educational provision. One NGO interviewee said: *“This partnership is tricky. It is like the government is neglecting its role”*. Additionally, it was felt among NGOs that they were called upon in policy discussions only when it was ‘convenient’ for the government. One CSO officer had this to say:

*This partnership with the government is questionable. It is only when the government needs us in order to achieve its agenda, just rubberstamping to show that NGOs were in attendance at a meeting that is when we are called upon. We are aware of what is happening* (CSO officer 2, 2011).

This research showed that even though the Zambian government wants to control education activities, it has realised that it cannot do everything by itself. This is because the government does not have adequate resources to deliver the depth or scope of education coverage mandated. Therefore, NGOs are allowed to engage in service delivery by government. They are encouraged to conduct their programmes/activities in the periphery of the country, far away from centres of power and in areas that are difficult and costly for the government to reach. These research findings revealed that the majority of INGOs and local NGOs work close to communities, particularly among the poor and vulnerable communities since that is where they see the most need for their support. Interview data indicated that NGOs believe that they complement government efforts in the provision of education. They step in to complement government efforts as they perceive that the government has failed to provide equitable access to quality education. As Miller-Grandvaux, *et al* (2002:9) observe that:

NGOs focus most of their activities in underserved communities not only because this is an area where they are less likely to compete with government, but also because it is where they believe they should be operating. What has come to define their niche in the education sector is partly the product of where they have seen an absence of government.

In the interviews, NGO officers maintained that the provision of Basic education is the responsibility of the state. NGO officers were of the view that their role needs to be seen as complementary to, rather than a substitute for, government roles and responsibilities. NGOs provide access to schooling opportunities for those unable to access the government system because of inadequate supply. Therefore, NGOs not only ‘ “fill in the gaps” but they also act

as a response to failures in the public and private sectors in providing basic services’ (Maslyukivska, 1999:14).

The role of NGOs in sector programmes is that they are required to supplement the role of government and align their activities/programmes within the framework defined by the sector wide approach. In my interviews, donor representatives and NGO officers were critical of the lack of clear national policy guidelines concerning the role of NGOs in education and as a result government officials have large discretionary authority in dealing with NGOs. One donor representative commented:

*Ministry of Education officials recognise NGOs by word of mouth but in reality*

*NGOs are sidelined by the government. For example in these so called PCC*

*meetings, there is lack of interest from Ministry of Education officials to work*

*with NGOs. On one hand, the government says it cannot manage to provide*

*education on its own, but on the other hand, it works alone (Donor*

*representative 1, 2011).*

This shows how the government regards NGOs. The government chooses how it wants to relate with NGOs. Additionally, the official education policy document though it mentions partnerships between government and NGOs, it does not address explicitly the roles and responsibilities that NGOs should play in the education sector. The government of Zambia has not formulated policies to guide government-NGO partnership and has not established strategies that can facilitate it. As a result, partnerships between the Zambian government and

NGOs were not effective. One wonders why politicians and policy-makers in the education sector in Zambia bother borrowing from other countries only the policy-talk, but not concrete models and practices. There is discursive policy-borrowing in Zambia whereby policy-makers borrow only the rhetoric from the global world without the intention of ever implementing the practices that accompany the particular policy talk (Cuban, 1998).

Indeed, in the absence of clear government policy on the role of NGOs in the sector programme context, their role remains blurred and negotiable. The government has discretionary authority in choosing the NGO partners that are invited to participate in the sector programme consultations and in awarding contracts to chosen NGOs in programme implementation. Indeed, as has been seen, these research findings indicated that the government was more favourable to NGOs involved in service provision than as critics of government policies. The extent to which NGOs are recognised by government is influenced by the extent of their contribution to service delivery and how evident it is in the education sector. NGOs with a good track record of educational service delivery for orphans and vulnerable groups have more legitimacy and more prospects to become involved in consultation with government officials. In such situations NGOs which are involved in service provision of Basic education cannot become overly critical of government policies without risking the partnership with government at a practical level. As many interviewees noted, this is a difficult situation to be in.

As indicated in the research findings, in chapter 5, the Zambian government does not regard NGOs as true partners who deserve more involvement in policy formulation and decision-making. These research findings in interviews indicate that the Zambian government

does not consult NGOs widely in policy formulation and decision-making. Most NGOs complained about the minimal degree to which the government consults them. Most times the Zambian government decides what it wants and makes the final decision. Klijn (2010:70) argues: “Partnership is about doing things differently, tackling problems together with society and private actors instead of doing it alone or privatising it to the market”. Indeed, one may argue that doing things differently is what is needed in the policy arena in Zambia. The most effective partnerships rest on conditions of trust and understanding which evolve over time.

It has been noted that, partnership builds on complementary skills and comparative advantages of partners, and because through synergy and the potential for future relationships between partners, it adds value to the sum of the partner’s individual contributions (Owen, 2000). Indeed, each actor in education policy- making has core competences and resources that, if appropriately arranged, are complementary to one another. For example, based on the research findings during my field visits, NGOs have the local knowledge; have the capability to mobilise community participation, tools and methods to ensure relevance to local needs; and can provide independent monitoring if given the opportunity. For example, my field observations during field visits with FAWEZA staff and Childfund International revealed more. Field observations in Chongwe, a rural area in Zambia showed that FAWEZA is assisting a local school (Chinyunyu basic school) to build a hostel for female pupils. FAWEZA is doing this in collaboration with the local people as well in that area. During the time of the field visit, the community members were erecting the structure and FAWEZA has agreed with school authorities and community members that once the structure is erected up to roofing level, it will provide roofing sheets and door frames. FAWEZA has taken this step of helping with the construction of a girls’ hostel in order to prevent girls from walking long



distances to get to school and to prevent them from living in unsafe small shelters on their own which is normally the tendency in rural communities. This is of importance as it will help to retain girls in school.

The field visit to Kafue urban and Kafue rural in Zambia enabled me to see and observe some of the activities that Childfund International, an NGO, is conducting. For example, in Kafue rural at Soloboni basic school Childfund International has constructed a borehole and desks were donated to the school. This helps pupils, teachers and other members of staff to have clean drinking water. At Munyeu basic school a 1x2 teachers' flat is being built. This will help with having teachers' accommodation near the school. This will definitely motivate teachers and enhance teachers' effectiveness. At Kalundu basic school the drilling of a borehole is being done (Fieldwork, 2011).

Partnership, it may be argued, is the most ethically appropriate approach to achieving educational delivery to all children of school-going age and of good quality. In chapter 3 it was noted that partnership was the "buzzword" of the 1990s but it might be suggested that partnership should move beyond from being a buzzword to best practice. In other words, what is said by word of mouth must be done in practice. In order to achieve EFA goals, effective partnership among all stakeholders such as government, NGOs and donors in the education sector is needed. The relationship between NGOs and donors is examined in the next section.

## **7.2. Donor-NGO Relations**

The majority of NGOs in Zambia depend on donor funding from external organisations to run their activities. The major donors involved in the education sector in Zambia include INGOs, bilateral and multilateral agencies. The findings of this study indicate that donors work with NGOs in Zambia because donors perceive NGOs as efficient, not bureaucratic and able to meet the needs of the poor at the grassroots. Donors regarded NGOs as important development partners in improving access to education. They recognised that NGOs are in a better position to articulate the needs of the local communities since they work at the grass-roots level. Where donors have observed that the government lacks capacity donors have depended on NGOs' expertise and experience to implement some of their programme support. NGOs have the skills of sensitising and mobilising the local communities. For example, USAID has funded Zambia Open Community Schools, an NGO which supports community schools. In the field of international development, the new interest in NGOs has happened in response to the perceived failure of state-led development approaches which were common during the 1970s and 1980s (Lewis, 1998:502). The so-called "new policy agenda" of the 1990s which combines neo-liberal economic policy prescriptions with a stated commitment to "good governance" has projected development NGOs as efficient and responsive alternatives to the state and as organisational actors with the potential to strengthen democratic processes (Robinson, 1993). Undeniably, NGOs have the potential to strengthen democratic processes and play a greater role in education policy-making but their dependence on external aid makes them vulnerable to following their funders' agenda. These research findings show that conditions are attached to donor funding. The problem with donor funding is that often the donor determines the parameters under which NGOs should operate to realise its policy goals. Donors tend to determine the educational activities that

NGOs should undertake irrespective of different environments. As Henderson correctly points out: 'A "one size fits all" external imposition has been the rule with the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and United States Agency for International Development playing key roles' (Henderson, 2002:106). Therefore, NGOs are in a dilemma. They must decide whether to empower the poor majority or to continue their solidarity with their international funders. As Takala and Doftori (2007: 94) put it: "The strong dependency of NGOs on donor agencies induces them to formulate their plans in a way that fits with particular agendas of educational development on the donor side". So much so, as Amutabi (2006:xxiv) points out: "However, buffeted between the forces of anti-liberal coercion and neo-liberal privatisation, NGOs are more vulnerable than ever to the myriad ways in which Northern governments and their development agencies and special interest groups are reshaping the development landscape in Africa". From these research findings NGOs in Zambia tend to compromise their interests and priorities as their designed programmes tend to be linked to donor interests and priorities to ensure funding. Even though, NGOs have their own mission statements that guide them in identifying, and, therefore their own priorities, they tend to design their programmes in line with donor priorities. Presently, donors are focusing on Basic Education; NGOs design their programmes with a focus on Basic education in order to have their proposals accepted for funding.

Additionally, the findings of this study show that NGOs are vulnerable to their funders for the 'survival' of their projects/programmes and ultimately the entire organisation. The majority of NGOs conduct project-oriented activities in trying to meet educational needs of the marginalised children. However, there is lack of sustainability of NGO projects as their funders, donors, often do not have a long-term commitment for their projects. These research findings reveal that some donors pull out after a year or so, which makes it difficult for

children who are sponsored under those donor funded projects to continue with school. This finding is consistent with the findings of Takala and Doftori (2007) who found that in Tanzania donor agencies including INGOs, often did not have a long-term commitment for individual NGO projects, although funding decisions were made yearly and support to a particular NGO project was short-lived. This was because of their urge to show effects of their operations to their home constituencies, donor agencies were concerned with “aid visibility”, but Tanzanian NGOs generally lacked strategic planning in their relationship with donor agencies. It may be argued that donor aid is not effective. As Moyo (2009:154) rightly puts it: “And one thing is for sure, depending on aid has not worked”. Therefore, through this research one might suggest that NGOs must stop depending on donor aid and make themselves sustainable. Some interviewees from NGOs suggested that NGOs should initiate income-generating activities as a way of making themselves sustainable. One interviewee said: *“It’s time we started looking at our local resources. There is need for us to mobilise local resources”*. For example, membership fees and monies raised through fundraising ventures.

It is evident from the findings of this study that donors in their approach to funding NGOs have an attitude of ‘take it’ or ‘leave it’ because of the conditions attached to their funding. As Miller-Grandvaux, *et al* (2003:10): note: “In recent years, relations between donors and NGOs have become more formal and donors have taken more control”. Miller-Grandvaux, *et al* (2003) findings in the four countries, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mali and Malawi indicated that donors were found more likely to define the education agenda, have NGOs compete for resources, and use them as contractors.

Indeed, NGO dependence on donor funding has determined the nature of relationship existing between donors and NGOs. Donors perceive NGOs as partners to help them implement their programmes and NGOs regard donors as financiers of their projects/programmes. Donors are encouraging national governments to work with NGOs to implement sector programmes through Sector-Wide Approaches. The next section discusses the role of NGOs and government in Sector-Wide Approaches.

### **7.3. Sector-Wide Approaches: the role of NGOs and Government**

In the majority of developing countries, there has been a paradigm shift in the modalities and design of external funding since the 1990s. Musonda (2003) notes that at the international level, there has been a shift from the orthodox donor-by-donor and project-by-project approach to Sub-or Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAs) of support. Lavergne (2004) explains that SWA is much commonly adopted in Africa and aid-dependent Asian Countries such as Vietnam and Bangladesh than in most of Latin America or in large Asian countries like China and India due to different degrees of aid-dependence.

In Zambia, it was noted in chapter 1 that the Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme (BESSIP) ran from 1999 to 2002. In 2003, Zambia adopted SWAs, where the Zambian Ministry of Education Strategic Plan was embarked on. The shift from projects to SWAs has redefined the respective roles of most donors in Zambia, and recipient governments in development co-operation. The World Bank (2001) explains that the shift to SWAs was necessitated by the following reasons:

- Donors' acknowledgement that the administrative demands associated with project-based strategies placed undue stress on Ministries of Education in developing countries thereby hindering the development of effective national strategies in the process;
- Donors' increasingly awareness that individual projects even good ones will have limited effect if the overall policy environment is not conducive to successful education reform;
- SWAs stress the importance of national 'ownership'; and

- SWAps have the capability to overcome the potential fungibility problem: where national ownership is lacking, donor agencies and governments normally have different objectives. In such a situation fungibility can be a problem, and aid is more likely to be a substitute for, rather than complement government effort.

The findings of this research indicate that SWAps have brought about new relationships among donors, government and NGOs. NGOs in education, the government of Zambia and donors have come together with a view of improving educational provision in all sub-sectors of the education sector. The Zambian government is slowly opening to NGOs by involving them in policy discussion meetings due to pressure from the donors. The adoption of SWAps by the Zambian government has brought about a ‘marriage of convenience’ between the Zambian government and NGOs due to donor pressure. Interviews with donor representatives indicated that the Zambian government is required to consult with NGOs, which according to donors they represent the disadvantaged and vulnerable and that it is a way of strengthening civil society. Therefore, the Zambian government is seen to consult NGOs in policy dialogue as witnessed by the involvement of NGOs in the joint government/donor education reviews and government/donor coordination meetings.

However, the problem that has accompanied this new set of relationships is that the clear-cut nature of such “partnerships” has been difficult to define and has been questioned by local NGOs in Zambia. This will be examined in greater detail later in this chapter.

These research findings indicate that the partnership existing between government, NGOs and donor agencies in Zambia is rhetorical in that it is based on prospects for resource access

from international donors rather than on a clear sense of a joint venture and shared learning and risks. The relationship between international donors and NGOs tends to be seen differently by the international “donor” agencies and the NGOs partner “recipient”. For example, whereas international donor agencies talk about partnership, it is not uncommon for the local NGO “partner” to consider the relationship purely in terms of transfer of resources. And for the international donors, according to Miller-Grandvaux, et al (2003) findings in the four countries of Africa- Ethiopia, Guinea, Malawi, and Mali, showed that donors turned to NGOs to implement education programmes for reasons which enhance the donors’ agenda. They drew attention to NGOs’ ability to achieve more measurable and cost effective results than governments do. They point out that donors felt that NGOs’ costs tend to be lower than a government’s, and that NGOs can meet deadlines better. They give an example of Guinea, where local NGOs built twice the number of schools as the government did with the same budget and met almost all construction deadlines. Miller-Grandvaux, *et al* (2003) also observe that donors felt that NGOs are easier to negotiate with than governments and easier to draw up contracts and agreements with than the private, for-profit. They point out that NGOs do not have to contend with the bureaucracy, politics, and other realities of the public sector.

Further, Lewis (1998b) notes that the trend has been for “dependent” partnerships to be more common than “active” ones. As Lewis (1998a:504) points out:

Active partnerships are those built through ongoing processes of negotiation, debate, occasional conflict, and learning through trial and error. Risks are taken, and although roles and purposes are clear they may change according to need and circumstance. Dependent partnerships on the other hand have a “blueprint character”, with relatively rigid



assumptions about comparative advantage, and are often linked to the availability of funding.

It may be argued that there is need to move away from the donor-recipient model. Donor agencies have to seek to redefine their relationships with NGOs through capacity building. Capacity building which involves shared skills and ideas openly exchanged may thus give an opportunity to move beyond the rhetoric partnership between donor agencies and NGOs.

Takala and Doftori (2007) findings in Tanzania showed that donor agencies did not have a clear policy on supporting NGOs in the sector programme context, their engagement with NGOs was provisional and tended to deal with individual NGOs on a case by case basis. They also found that apart from sector-specific aims, the majority of the donor agencies also support NGO activities in pursuit of the overall goal of building civil society. The findings of this study indicate that, unlike the way it used to be in the past, bilateral and multilateral agencies are increasingly moving towards the direct funding of NGOs rather than the previous model of funding through INGOs in the partnership approach. This is encouraging heavy dependence on bilateral and multilateral donors by NGOs.

However, in spite of the above, these research findings indicate that over the years, donor funding to the NGOs has been reduced. Interviews with two donor representatives show that this was due to the global economic crisis. However, interview data with another donor representative indicate that it was due to the signing of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda by most donors. According to the donor representative:

*This is because most donors have signed the Aid Effectiveness Agenda in order to*

*improve efficiency among donors and governments. As a result, we are giving funds directly to the government in order to build capacity in government as it is the responsibility of the government to provide basic services to its citizens. Therefore, we have realised that we have to support government as NGOs are not here forever; they can go* (Donor representative 2,2011).

This significant shift has contributed to the reduction in donor funding from bilateral and multilateral agencies to NGOs with the view to ensure aid effectiveness.

As Packalen (2007:29) notes:

In March 2005, over one hundred signatories representing donor and developing countries and aid organisations endorsed the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness. With its five principles-ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results, and mutual accountability-the declaration aims to significantly increase the impact of aid.

Actually, the move from projects to sector programme support and general budget support by bilateral and multilateral donor agencies has also contributed to the reduction in donor funding that goes towards NGO support. Alikhan, *et al.*, (2007) observe that while the 1980s and early 1990s saw donors bypassing the state, the move to SWAs and multi-donor budget support (MDBS) in the south (i.e., in developing countries) signifies a swing back towards the state that (at least in theory) contracts out core services as part of its own reform (Alikhan,

*et al.*, 2007: 4, 46). They explain that shifts toward SWApS and MDBS in Africa, Asia and Latin American countries have contributed to new dimensions to the architecture of aid within which governments and NGOs operate in the twenty-first century.

In Tanzania, Takala and Doftori (2007) showed that INGOs were more and more becoming the sole sources of funding of local NGOs. They found that under the new modality aid - SWApS and general budget support, many NGOs perceived donor agencies were abandoning them by focusing on their partnership with government. They explain further that counter to that perception was the fact that donor agencies were indirectly supporting NGOs by requesting involvement of NGOs in policy dialogue and planning and by putting leverage on government policies in issues where NGOs had experience and expertise such as education of nomadic children and children affected by HIV and AIDS.

During this period of SWApS, external aid to the Ministry of Education in Zambia has been channelled by donor agencies through a common basket called “sector pool”. These research findings indicate that Zambia not only utilises domestic resources in the education sector but also relies heavily on external funding. Ministry of Education officials at the headquarters pointed out that the Ministry of Education in Zambia receives donor support. One Ministry of Education official said “*Donors put in their money in the education sector. As a result, donors participate in education policy as they want to see their money ‘work’*” (Ministry of Education 4, 2011). In Zambia donor support to the Ministry of Education budget in the period 2008-2010 showed an increase of 22% (Zambia, Ministry of Education, 2011:13). While looking at the year 2009 compared with the year 2008, it shows a big increase. In 2009

funding from donor agencies stood at 353 Billion Zambian Kwacha showing a remarkable increase of 85.3 Billion Zambian Kwacha representing 79% increase compared to 2008 allocation (Ministry of Education, 2009:10).

Having adopted Sector-Wide Approaches the Zambian Ministry of Education is supposed to have more ownership of the development in the sector programme than the international community. Ministry of Education officials claimed that they own the development process without influence from the donor agencies. One Ministry of Education official said:

*Donor programmes are in line with Basic Education policy. Of course donors have their own preferences, sometimes they have targeted projects but there are in line with the Basic Education policy* (Ministry of Education 1, 2011).

Foster (2000:9) describes SWAps as follows:

...all significant funding for the sector supports a single sector policy and expenditure programme, under Government leadership, adopting common approaches across the sector, and progressing towards relying on Government procedures to disburse and account for all funds.

There is the rhetoric of ownership of the educational agenda by the Zambian Ministry of Education. The evidence gathered from the analysis of policy documents in Zambia suggests that there is much external influence on the formulation of the official policy agenda. Firstly, it must be noted that the current education policy, 'Educating Our Future', in Zambia was formulated based on evaluation studies funded by the World Bank and other donor agencies (Takala, 1998). Secondly, under SWAps, the Ministry of Education in Zambia is required to prepare an annual work plan including the budget which is not put into effect without the approval of donor agencies. This is because Zambia is dependent on external assistance and donor agencies using their funds determine the direction of the development process. The argument by Hyden (2005) concerning donors taking hold of Tanzania's destiny can be applied to the Zambian situation. "Perhaps the most significant change in the Tanzanian power map in the past ten years is the extent to which the international community, through international financial institutions and donor agencies, has managed to get a hold on Tanzanian destiny" (Hyden, 2005:16).

Indeed, donors do not only set the educational agenda but are also involved in the implementation machinery directly or indirectly. This is done through their provision of resources such as financial and human (for example, technical advisors) as conditions are attached to aid. This study found that the international donors are using the hard governance through the provision of funding to the Zambian government. Hard governance concerns the process of governing through negotiations (Jachtenfuchs, 1995). Negotiations are done between donors and the government of Zambia through various policy discussion meetings. If the government of Zambia chooses to go its own way in implementing education policy for example, donors use certain sanctions such as withdrawing funding. For example, a donor representative said the following in my interviews:

*There are few donors left in the education sector now. Donors tend to be critical but in a constructive way. Our Embassy has postponed \$40 million meant to be given to the Ministry of Education because of lack of dialogue with the Ministry* (Donor representative 2, 2010).

In the policy space in Europe, Lawn and Lingard (2002:292) have argued that there exists a “...magistracy of influence’ in the European educational policy domain: a policy elite that acts across borders, displays a similar habitus, have a feel for the same policy game and are, in a sense, bearers of an emergent European educational policy and policy space”. Others have seen a ‘magistracy’ at work in the Middle East (Donn and Al Manthri, 2010). Similarly, in line with this research, one can argue further that such a ‘magistracy of influence’ does not only work in a European or Middle Eastern space but also in a global space which we have witnessed in the case of Zambia’s education policy and involvement of various policy actors, both national and global policy actors. For example, the attainment of EFA and MDG goals. As noted in chapter 1, the government of Zambia has stipulated in its policy documents the need to ensure the achievement of universal Basic Education of nine years by the year 2015 (Ministry of Education, 1996:23; Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2006). The target year for achieving this EFA goal is as a result of the influence of global actors such as international donors. It is important to know how Zambia is progressing towards achieving this EFA goal. I, now turn to access and quality issues in Basic education in Zambia.

#### 7.4. Access and Quality issues in Basic Education in Zambia

These research findings indicate that notable progress has been made in the area of educational access. However, in spite of donor funding to the education sector and the involvement of NGOs in education delivery, there are still school going age children who do not access education and the majority of basic schools have poor quality of education in Zambia. Interviews with NGO officers indicated factors hindering children from accessing Basic education as follows as outlined in Table 19 below:

**Table 19:** Factors hindering access to Basic Education

Rural Areas	Urban Areas
Long distance covered to get to school.	Long distance covered to get to school in some cases.
Household chores a) Girls - cleaning house and looking after their siblings.  b) Boys- Herding domesticated animals or fishing.  Factor affecting both boys and girls:  Seasonal activities e.g. collecting of caterpillars, farming and scaring away of birds in the field.	Household chores, particularly, among children found in shanty compounds e.g. they engage in family income generating activities like street vending.
Cost of Education- user fees unaffordable due to high poverty levels.	Cost of Education- user fees unaffordable due to high poverty levels among vulnerable children and HIV and AIDS have contributed due to loss of bread winners in some families.
Cultural beliefs and Customs e.g. early marriages especially among girls and pregnancies	Lack of space in some schools. Some schools are overcrowded.

**Source:** Summary of the picture that emerged from the researcher's data analysis, 2011

Headteachers and teachers stated that some children were unable to access education due to the following factors: poor attitudes towards education by some parents; lack of space to accommodate all school-aged children in schools; and unaffordable school fees especially at upper basic educational level, i.e., grades 8 and 9.

Focus group discussions with some community members also revealed that education is costly; therefore, some parents are unable to send their children to school. What has exacerbated the situation is the impact of HIV and AIDS on households. As Robson, and Kanyanta (2007:417) write:

The global spread of HIV and AIDS has presented a major threat to development, affecting the health of the poor and many aspects of social and economic development. The greatest impact of the epidemic has been felt in sub-Saharan Africa, and Zambia ranks among the worst hit countries.

HIV and AIDS have negatively affected the education sector in Zambia. Due to HIV and AIDS, children of parents infected with HIV and AIDS especially among the poor are unable to send their children to school because of costs associated with their health. The meagre family income is spent on medical care. Also, in cases of AIDS orphans (Children whose parents died of AIDS) often are looked after by their grandmothers or aunties and uncles who in most cases cannot afford to pay school fees for these orphans. In such situations, these vulnerable children are unable to go to school. This doubtless threatens the achievement of EFA goals.



Additionally, the quality of education in the majority of schools in Zambia is low and falling.

The two tables below give us a picture of progression rates at grades 7/8 and 9/10.

**Table 20:** Grade 7 Examination results from 2003 to 2008

Number of pupils who entered and sat for Examinations and Progression Rates at Grade 7, 2003 to 2008								
	Entered			Sat				
Year	Boys	Girls	National	Boys	Girls	National	Volume	Progression Rate
2003	125,640	99,227	224,867	115,204	90,048	205,252	1,436,764	52.20%
2004	137,314	109,322	246,636	131,929	104,431	236,360	1,654,520	47.33%
2005	151,316	120,905	272,221	139,969	110,670	250,639	1,754,473	50.41%
2006	162,964	130,619	293,583	149,685	118,412	268,097	1,876,679	52.65%
2007	173,670	141,507	315,177	159,922	128,786	288,708	2,020,956	60.33%
2008	181,515	150,764	332,279	165,442	135,985	301,427	2,109,989	66.88%

**Source:** Zambia, Ministry of Education, 2010: 50

**Table 21:** Grade 9 (Junior Secondary leaving) Examination results from 2003 to 2008

Number of pupils who entered and sat for Examinations and Progression Rates at Grade 9 , 2003 to 2008									
	Entered			Sat					
Year	Boys	Girls	National	Boys	Girls	National	Volume	Certificate pass	Progression Rate
2003	77,517	67,604	145,121	72,887	62,551	135,438	2,708,760	56.10%	26.91%
2004	88,998	77,952	166,950	82,523	70,910	153,433	3,068,660	53.30%	26.55%
2005	101,738	88,651	190,389	93,446	80,106	173,552	3,471,040	55.30%	36.32%
2006	103,604	91,639	195,243	94,416	81,847	176,263	3,525,260	48.33%	37.94%
2007	116,495	102,241	218,736	102,534	87,065	189,599	3,791,980	50.65%	50.65%
2008	134,101	119,931	254,032	121,365	106,742	228,107	4,562,140	48.57%	39.80%

**Volume is based on the number of core subjects by candidates entered**

**Source:** Zambia, Ministry of Education, 2010: 51

An analysis of the examination results given in the two tables above indicate that there are low progression rates at grades 7/8 and 9/10.

Zambia is one of the members of the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring of Educational Quality (SACMEQ). One of the purposes of SACMEQ is to expand opportunities for educational planners to gain the technical skills required to monitor and evaluate the quality of Basic education (Zambia, Ministry of Education, 2010). Presently, SACMEQ consists of 15 Ministries of Education in Eastern and Southern Africa: Botswana,

Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zanzibar and Zimbabwe (Zambia, Ministry of Education, 2010). The 2005 SACMEQ results indicate that Zambia is grouped among the countries that have the lowest student reading achievements (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Learning achievement is one of the vital indicators for quality education in Zambia as Zambia, Ministry of Education (2010:32) notes: “Learning achievement remains at low levels with mean scores in English and Mathematics in Grade 5, for example, standing at 35% and 38% respectively”. These research findings as noted in chapter 5 indicate that on the whole, the provision of good quality education in the majority of schools was poor due to the following factors: lack of trained teachers; inadequate teaching and learning materials; dilapidated and inadequate infrastructure; inadequate and poor sanitary conditions; poor learning environment; pupil absenteeism especially in rural areas; and teacher absenteeism particularly in rural areas. This is in consistent with Ministry of Education (2010:32) which notes: “Generally the quality of education in Zambia is compromised by various factors which include the overloaded and compartmentalised curriculum, low pupil/teacher contact time and the lack of sufficient educational materials”. Ministry of Education (2010:32) explains:

The loss of teachers through death and sickness has greatly reduced the pupil/teacher contact hours in many schools. This includes the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

Indeed, HIV and AIDS have adversely affected the number of teachers in schools because they have contributed to absenteeism and shortage of teachers due to sickness, attending

funerals and death. Personal communication with one of the USAID sponsored project, EQUIP 2 officials at the Ministry of Education headquarters showed that HIV/AIDS has contributed to the poor quality of education in most schools in Zambia. He said:

*HIV/ AIDS has adversely affected the quality of education in that it has contributed to teacher absenteeism in some schools resulting in reduced pupil/teacher contact time. HIV/AIDS has also affected households thereby reducing their income. As a consequence, most children from households affected by HIV/AIDS go to school hungry, therefore, they fail to concentrate in class and their performance tends to be poor. In addition, some school going children are household heads due to the death of their parents, so they have multi-responsibilities. This negatively affects their performance in school (EQUIP 2 official, 2011).*

Mwanza's (2008) study in the central region of Zambia showed that absenteeism among pupils was common in most of the community schools because of the HIV and AIDS which has increased the number of orphans and vulnerable children. Due to the impact of HIV and AIDS when the breadwinner (a parent or guardian) is sick or has died some children are unable to go to school because they have to work at home or are engaged in family income generating activities (Mwanza, 2008). Girls' school attendance and performance at school are affected more than the boys' as most often when the mother or guardian is sick, the girls have to clean the house and do other household chores before going to school or they are absent

in order to cook for the sick and their siblings (Mwanza, 2008). Although, the Ministry of Education in Zambia recognises the negative effect of HIV and AIDS, these research findings revealed that it was not effectively playing its significant role of minimising the impact of HIV and AIDS on school children. This study found that no government bursary schemes were being provided to children orphaned by AIDS and other vulnerable children.

Indeed, the educational needs of school aged children who are supposed to be in basic school are not being met or already in basic school are not being met well. Dependence on international donor funding in the education sector by both government and NGOs has promoted donor-driven policies of neo-liberalism in Zambia which has failed to meet the educational needs of children. I will be examining the issue of market driven policies promoted by many donors vis-a-vis education in Zambia in greater detail in the next section, but in the meantime it is important to be aware that these policies have promoted inequities in education as only those who can afford to pay school fees for their children are assured of their children's education. It was noted in chapter 2 that although those supporting the neo-liberal agenda appear to promote 'equality' in their approach the reality is that their approach has exacerbated inequalities in education. As Bush argues, neo-liberalism produces an unjust and unequal system of wealth creation thereby excluding the poor especially in the Global South (Bush, 2007).

### 7.5. Effect of Market Driven Policies on Education in Zambia

As noted in chapter 1, Zambia recognises the principle that education is a fundamental human right. This is clearly stipulated in the national constitution and education policy (GRZ, 1996; MOE, 1996). In practice, however, the right to education is enjoyed by the rich, but not by the poor. This is because of poverty which has been exacerbated by market driven policies as it will be seen in the following paragraphs.

According to the Government of the Republic of Zambia (2008), high poverty levels in Zambia have led to some children failing to enrol in schools. The Central Statistical Office of Zambia in 2011 reported as follows:

Further characterisation of poverty by level of intensity reveals that the majority of the population were **afflicted** (my emphasis) by extreme levels of poverty. Out of the total estimated population of between 11 and 13 million persons in 2006 and 2010, respectively, over 42 percent of them were classified as extremely poor...Results further reveal that there were proportionately more extremely poor persons in rural (about 58%) than in urban areas (about 13%) during the review period (Central Statistical Office, 2011:14).

Therefore, the situation is worse in rural areas where poverty levels are so high and the majority of parents cannot afford to send their children to school resulting in rural-urban inequalities. One may suggest that wealth gaps between urban and rural areas exacerbate

already existing inequalities between girls and boys. As Watkins (2000) argues “...poverty reinforces gender inequity so that girls born into poor households face far more restricted opportunities for education than girls born into wealthy households” (Watkins, 2000:156).

The global economic agenda, embedded in neo-liberal policies has affected the education sector in Zambia. When the country embraced SAPs, as earlier noted in chapter 2, the government of Zambia spent more funds on servicing IMF loans than on public services such as education and health. In the 1990s as Ministry of Education in Zambia (2007:14) notes: “Per capita expenditure for pupils at primary school level was a meager \$17, exactly half the amount in 1985. Personal emoluments subsumed 95 percent of the public expenditure on primary education with no public funding left for textbooks, and other education materials.” The Ministry of Education in Zambia (2007:14) continues, “In 1998, the Government spent only 2.5% of the GDP on education. This declined to 2.1% in 2002.” The poor funding of the education sector adversely affected its performance in terms of both access and quality of service delivery. In Zambia, in the early 1990s, 250,000 primary school age children were not attending school and 32,000 children could not find places in Grade 1 (Ministry of Education, 2007: 14). “By 2001, it was estimated that 30% of children in the school-going age were not enrolled, which translated into nearly 620,000 children. The problem was particularly high in the rural areas where, for children aged 7, over 55% were not enrolled” (Ministry of Education, 2007: 14). Additionally, the Basic education sector was characterised by dilapidated education infrastructure throughout the country; lack of school equipment; low motivation among teachers due to poor conditions of service; and diminishing education opportunities particularly for disadvantaged children such as the disabled, girls and those living in remote rural (Ministry of Education, 2007).

As a result of the state of affairs above, the quality of education remained low, which led to loss of confidence in the value of education among parents and communities in Zambia (Ministry of Education, 2007).

In Zambia, cost sharing in education was introduced in 1985 (Kelly, 1999). According to the Ministry of Education (1996) in its official education policy, *Educating Our Future*, it was envisaged that cost sharing will take special account of the situation of the poor and vulnerable and will be such that it will not make their participation more difficult. And the World Bank notes:

Greater cost sharing, it was hoped, would help the poor because it would mobilise more resources from better-off groups and those resources could then be used to improve services for poorer groups. For this goal to be achieved, though, the poor needed to be exempt from fees or otherwise protected. Experience in and since the 1980s has shown that the poor have not been effectively protected in many cases. Planning for new or higher fees has frequently outstripped adequate preparation and implementation of exemptions or safety nets. (World Bank, 1996:1).

According to these research findings user fees among poor households hindered the education of their children. For example, data collected through interviews and focus group discussions revealed the following:



- *Some children do not access schooling because of vulnerability. Some children are orphans and are kept by grandparents who do not have a source of income (Deputy Headteacher, School F, 2011).*
- *Some children drop-out from school due to lack of school fees. After a while we see some of them coming back but most of them never come back (Deputy Headteacher, School F, 2011).*
- *In this community, we have many vulnerable children who are not in school because of lack of school fees (Community member, 2011).*

Even if there is free education at the primary school level, parents still pay other fees such as PTA and maintenance fees and have other requirements to meet. In most cases parents still cannot afford these other school costs. For example, parents in focus group discussions and a headteacher of a basic school in interviews said the following:

- *My daughter could not be enrolled in grade 1 last year because I could not afford to buy a school uniform for her. I am just a marketer and I am struggling financially (Mother A, 2011).*
- *We have a lot of vulnerable children in this community and not all go to school because of lack of school fees. Most people are peasant farmers in this community and the poverty level is high (Father B, 2011).*
- *The price of the school uniform is high. Many parents cannot afford (Headteacher, School D, 2011).*

As a result some children do not attend basic school or drop-out. Interviews with NGO officers indicated that children fail to enrol in school or drop-out of school because their parents cannot afford the cost of schooling for their children. Similarly, teachers indicated

that the main cause for children dropping out of school at grades especially 8 and 9 was poverty. Indeed, poverty made it difficult for poor households to pay fees and buy instructional materials demanded by school authorities. As a consequence, the formal education system has been negatively affected since many parents cannot afford to pay tuition fees demanded by schools. Peter Cookson (2002), points out inconsistencies in market theory, and shows that when applied to public schooling, the same theory cannot govern education in a socially just way. For the market advocates, he explains, schools and education are governed by same economic laws of supply and demand as the commodities market. He points out that market proponents believe that good products drive out bad and the public will not tolerate waste if it holds the purse strings directly. Cookson in his article questions-“What evidence is there that markets distribute goods and services in an equitable market?” (Cookson, 2002:58). He points out that markets create unjust distribution systems. He argues that markets do not spread wealth equitably by merit and /or need as markets do not create opportunity for all, rather, they create profits, unevenly shared.

It has already been seen that privatisation of parastatals in Zambia has had negative effects as it led to the retrenchment of many workers. As Situmbeko and Zulu (2004) note:

Formal manufacturing employment fell from 75,400 in 1991 to 43,320 in 1998. Paid employment in mining and manufacturing fell from 140,000 in 1991 to 83,000 in 2000. Paid employment in agriculture fell from 78,000 in 1990 to 50,000 in 2000 and employment in textile manufacturing fell from 34,000 in the early 1990s to 4,000 in 2001 (Situmbeko and Zulu, 2004:9).

Actually, the majority of those retrenched were breadwinners in their families. Abruptly, they were not capable to support their families and could no longer pay school fees for their children. This worsened poverty in the country. As Shah (2010: online) explains, “Many

developing nations are in debt and poverty partly due to the policies of international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.”

Additionally, the liberalisation of the market has had its own negative effect on the education of children. It was seen in chapter 2 that the agricultural liberalisation programme undertaken by the government in the 1990s led to the agricultural sector decline. This is because the government removed subsidies on agricultural inputs and the buying of farm produce was left to the private sector that was unreliable in most cases. As Fagernas and Roberts (2004:10) agree: “The government withdrew from input distribution, and subsidies on the distribution of fertiliser and marketing of maize were removed... the private sector proved unable to mobilise finance to cope with the consequences of the disastrous drought of 1992 and with the bumper harvest of the following year”. In fact in 2000 the World Bank itself acknowledged that the removal of all subsidies on maize and fertiliser under the World Bank/IMF structural adjustment loans led to “stagnation and regression instead of helping Zambia’s agricultural sector” (Deininger and Olinto, 2000:3). This resulted in declining incomes among farmers (Henriot, 1997). Actually, the majority of farmers especially small-scale farmers were left worse off than before the liberalisation of the agricultural sector. This undoubtedly aggravated poverty in the country. Many farmers particularly small scale farmers could no longer meet school requirements for their children. Indeed, with incomes falling and employment rising, girls’ education was more affected than that of boys. As GRZ-UNDP (1996:46) observes:

The impacts of structural adjustment, especially poverty and unemployment, have tended to affect women and girl children more than males. One immediate impact has been to further increase females’ workloads in order for the household to earn enough money to cover its basic needs and make ends meet. Typically this has

involved married women having to engage in coping strategies such as petty trading, which must be undertaken in addition to their normal responsibilities for running and caring for the household. This often leads to girl children being withdrawn from school to help look after the home while their mothers are out trying to earn some money.

In this research, in-depth interviews with NGO officers, teachers and headteachers revealed the following:

- *From my observations as a field worker, many girls drop-out from school because of household chores. The few who remain in school perform poorly most times* (NGO officer 4, 2010).
- *Some children engage in ututeba<sup>12</sup>, small businesses, to help their parents raise family income* (NGO officer 7, 2010).
- *Absenteeism among pupils at this school is high. Some pupils come to school only two days in a week. Many remain at home to help with domestic tasks especially girls since their mothers are away from home selling products at the market. While some children engage in street-vending* (Teacher 1, School F, 2011).
- *Some children stay away from school in order to help their parents run small businesses to raise family income* (Deputy Headteacher, School F, 2011).

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12. Referring to small businesses in the informal sector in Zambia

These research findings indicated that up to this day, many people in Zambia have not recovered from the disastrous effects of SAPs. The education sector has also been negatively affected by SAPs as I totally agree with the Global campaign for Education (2004) that argues that IMF policies have squeezed Zambia's education system. This is clearly explained below.

One of the problems affecting schools I visited during my fieldwork was the critical shortage of trained and qualified teachers. For example, at Mulola basic school, a rural school in Lusaka province, staff establishment was 20 but had only 7 trained teachers (this is inclusive of the headteacher and deputy headteacher). These 7 teachers taught 415 pupils from grades 1-9. Such reports were common in urban schools too: at school D, a teacher stated:

*"We only have 7 teachers including the headteacher to teach 428 teachers at this school. To teach effectively we need more teachers".* And a deputy headteacher at school F said: *"There is a problem of teacher shortage at this school. Some teachers are retiring and some are dying. We need more teachers"*. This research revealed that the shortage of teachers in schools was mainly due to slow recruitment and deployment of teachers by government. Global campaign for Education (2004:4) reports that: "Zambia's education achievement is being undermined by a severe shortage of teachers. Something like 9000 vacancies remain unfilled, while almost exactly the same number of recently qualified teachers sit unemployed ...". The problem of teachers in Zambia may be regarded as a problem of teacher numbers. While there is no doubt that Zambia faces challenges of teacher supply, there are equally serious challenges of teacher deployment. To date in Zambia, according to findings in my fieldwork, there are many qualified teachers in urban areas who are unemployed, while there are unfilled posts in rural areas. For example, interviews with teachers and headteachers revealed the following: *"The government is not focusing on recruiting and deploying*

*teachers. Just to give an example of myself, I completed my teacher training at Evelyn Hone College where I obtained a diploma in 2007 but the government has not deployed me. I am only helping out at this community school*” (Teacher 1, School C, 2011). Another teacher said: *There is need to recruit more teachers. There are many qualified teachers but not in school. What is happening to teachers who have been trained?* (Teacher 1, School B, 2011). *“Recruitment of teachers is still slow. This has led to the shortage of teachers in schools”* (Headteacher, School F, 2011). Indeed, this is because of the change in government policy with regards to recruitment and deployment. Before the early 2000s recruitment of newly qualified teachers was normally automatic. However, from the late 2000s onwards there has been policy change relating to teacher recruitment and deployment (Subulwa, 2000:26). Deployment of newly qualified teachers now depends on availability of funds. As Mulkeen (2010) notes: “In Zambia, financial constraints prevented teacher recruitment in 2002-03, creating a large pool of unemployed qualified teachers” (Mulkeen, 2010:24). As a result, there have often been delays in recruiting teachers which has affected the number of teachers in schools and the delivery of quality education because teachers walk the streets for too long and lose the teaching methods they learned in their training.

Additionally, even when deployment of teachers is done, many teachers prefer to work in urban areas to rural areas. As a consequence, schools in rural areas are left with empty posts, or have longer delays in filling posts. One might argue that these problems cannot be delinked from the IMF /World Bank policies. In 2003, the IMF forced the government of Zambia to put on hold the recruitment of teachers and health workers and impose a wage freeze in the public sector. As the Global Campaign for Education (2004) affirms:

Last year, the Fund froze lending to Zambia after a higher budgetary

deficit than anticipated, and told the government to reduce its public

sector wage bill to no more than 8% of GDP. In order to achieve this, the Ministry of Finance not only had to withdraw long overdue wage increases, it also had to ban any hiring of teachers or health workers (Global Campaign for Education , 2004:1).

The impact on the poor was immediate and severe as in most cases they lack financial resources for textbooks or extra tuition for their children. As Global Campaign for Education (2004) reports:

Due to lack of teachers, Zambian schools face a choice between turning students away illegally, or trying to function with as many as 100 pupils to a class. Some schools in the Western Province thought they might not be able to reopen after the holidays due to unmanageable teacher shortages.

In my fieldwork I found that the majority of teachers in basic schools were teaching huge class sizes. Some interview accounts of teachers and a deputy headteacher are as follows:

- *I teach grade 6 pupils. There are 100 pupils in my class. This affects the quality of teaching as the textbooks are not enough* (Teacher 1, School C, 2011).
- *Some teachers have 80 pupils per class which makes marking of students' tasks difficult. While some teachers have up to 100 pupils* (Deputy headteacher, School F, 2011).
- *These big classes are a problem. The quality of education is adversely affected as it is difficult to mark exercise books and to enforce discipline in class. Also, the teaching-learning materials are inadequate* (Teacher 2, School F, 2011).

Indeed, these big classes surpass the recommended class size in Zambia. “The Ministry of Education recommends a class size of 45 at the basic level” (Examinations Council of Zambia, 2008:63).

During my fieldwork it was also common to find teachers trained to teach only grades 1-7 teaching grades 8 and 9 (at the Junior secondary level) in order to cover shortage. At all the 7 schools visited I found teachers with primary teacher certificates teaching grades 8 and 9 pupils. For example, one teacher said: *“We have only 2 teachers qualified to teach Junior secondary school pupils at this school. I and my headteacher* (Teacher 1, School F, 2011). This undoubtedly adversely affected the quality of education.

Low teacher motivation was another problem in the schools I visited during my fieldwork. Teachers cited low salaries, poor accommodation, poor school infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms particularly in urban areas, inadequate textbooks and other teaching and learning materials as factors that have contributed to lowering the morale of teachers. One may argue that when teachers are demotivated their performance tends to be low. This is in consistent with Kelly’s argument 21 years ago that the lack of motivation among teachers is probably undermining educational performance in Zambia (Kelly, 1991). Teacher absenteeism is also common. According to my research findings NGO officers and community members expressed dissatisfaction at teacher performance as absenteeism was observed to be common among teachers. For example ZANEC found that 42% of teachers were reported absent from schools in its research on teacher absenteeism in Zambia in 2010 (Field notes, 14/01/ 2011). Many community members stated that most teachers were absent from school, leaving pupils to write notes on the chalkboard on their own (Fieldnotes, 17/01/2011). This finding was in



line with the findings of the Examinations Council of Zambia (2010) which observed that absenteeism, late-coming and knocking off early continue to be a problem among teachers. Clearly, these issues can have an adverse bearing on learning achievement of pupils, because they all reduce the time for teacher-pupil teaching and learning interactions. One may argue that teacher motivation is one of the important components needed for the goals of EFA to be achieved in Zambia. As Chireshe and Shumba (2011:113) affirm, “The relevance of job satisfaction and motivation are very crucial to the long-term growth of any educational system around the world.”

Indeed, this shows the failure of neo-liberal policies in Zambia as Basic education deteriorated when SAPs were implemented. Klees (2010) notes that even many neo-liberal economists admitted SAPs had harmful, if not devastating, consequences. He argues , “Yet current-day mechanisms such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Process...continue to produce results that look very similar to those produced by the bankrupt SAPs” (Klees, 2010:16).

It is important, however, to recognise that neo-liberal SAPs and instruments such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers have been imposed on Zambia by International Financial Institutions such as the World Bank and IMF. In the pretext of alleviating poverty these measures have actually not reduced the dependency of Zambia on developed nations. As Kelly (1999) notes many years ago that increased Zambia’s dependency on donor aid for many of the non-salary costs of providing education has caused aid donors to have significant impact on policies and future direction of education.

In summary, in Zambia neo-liberal policies have exacerbated poverty and inequalities as many people lost jobs through retrenchments due to Structural Adjustment Programmes. Abdi and Ellis (2007) agree that neo-liberal policies have in fact resulted in the deterioration of socioeconomic conditions and life chances for most human beings living in Zambia and other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. It has been noted that NGOs have provided relief to the poor who have been adversely affected by SAPs in Zambia.

The next section builds on what has been discussed in the preceding sections addressing the question of whether the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform can enhance the achievement of EFA in Zambia.

## **7.6. Participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform and the achievement of EFA in Zambia**

The previous sections of this study have shown that there is need for NGOs to actively participate in education policy-making and implementation in order to enhance the achievement of EFA goals in Zambia.

NGO representatives said that their participation in Basic Education policy reform makes the Government aware of what is happening in the education sector especially at the grass-roots level. Interviews with all stakeholders (NGO officers, donor representatives, headteachers, teachers, academics and community members) revealed that issues of access, equity, retention and quality in education can be made aware to the government.

However, the findings of this research showed that there was lack of consistency among NGOs in their advocacy work when they are dealing with educational issues. One of the academics said: *NGOs would speak about an issue once. Then they would keep quiet. There is failure to follow up issues consistently among NGOs* (Academic 1, 2011). Additionally, donors, headteachers and teachers held the same view of lack of consistency among NGOs. For example, a teacher said: *“All in all, NGOs do not speak up. They would start speaking about an issue but along the way they stop.”* (Teacher 3, 2011).

Donor representatives, academics, headteachers, and teachers were of the view that advocacy in Zambia must be strengthened. NGO Officers need to speak up about the poor quality of education that is existing in most schools in Zambia. There is need for adequate teaching and learning materials in schools and for more teachers to be recruited. Currently, newly qualified teachers have to wait even for a period of 2 years after their graduation to be recruited (Field notes, 19/01/2011). There are many qualified teachers in the communities who have not been employed (Field notes, 19/01/2011). In Zambia, the need to recruit more teachers is urgent so as to cover shortage and to replace those who are retiring. Hence NGOs need to actively engage government so that it speeds up its recruitment process of teachers. Additionally, the need for the provision of sufficient teaching and learning materials should be on the agenda of NGOs if the quality of education is to be accomplished in schools.

Furthermore, this study found that children with special educational needs (disabled children) were not adequately catered for in schools (Field notes 19/01/2011; 4/02/2011). For example, this research found that the infrastructure in most schools is not user friendly for children with special educational needs such as storey buildings which hinder accessibility and toilets which do not cater for the disabled (Field notes, 19/01/2011). Moreover, the curriculum in basic schools is not suited for visually impaired students. For example, science and mathematics subjects are taught the same way to blind students as to 'normal' students (Field notes, 04/02/2011). For example, a teacher said: *These NGOs should do more as they are partners in education provision. They need to speak more so that pressure is put on government. When pressure is put on the government, it will implement its policies, for example programs to do with inclusive learning for children with special education needs* (Teacher 2, School, 2011). Therefore, this can be an area that NGOs should look into in their advocacy work in order to ensure that EFA is achieved.

NGOs need to actively participate in Basic Education Policy Reform in order to contribute to the achievement of EFA in Zambia. In other words, NGOs need to redouble their efforts if EFA goals are to be accomplished. Through ‘strong’ advocacy and lobbying, NGOs can make the government aware of access problems in education. Also, NGOs can make the government aware of quality problems in education. There is need to continuously hold the government accountable to do what it promised the citizenry. Through government budget tracking, NGOs can ensure that the government through the Ministry of Education releases funds to schools without delays and that funds are used for the intended purposes.

In addition, through advocacy and lobbying, NGOs can sensitise parents and community members especially in rural areas to send their children to school. NGOs should also be able to identify the right children i.e. the disadvantaged and vulnerable to support at all times who need their assistance. This will ensure that funds are channelled to the right cause- assisting vulnerable children.

As earlier alluded to, this study revealed that NGOs do play a role in policy-making and implementation in Zambia. NGOs highlight issues in education policy and these are mainly done in Sector Advisory Groups (for national NGOs) or Project Coordination Committee (for INGOs). The government of Zambia has invited NGOs to participate in policy deliberations at some levels. Such fora provide opportunities for NGOs to advocate for policy change and implementation.

However, in spite of NGO activities in the education sector, there are still children who do not have access to education and the quality of education is poor in most schools in Zambia. Partnerships between NGOs and government must be strengthened in order to enable NGOs to advocate for policy change in collaboration with government officials. NGO active participation in Basic Education Policy hinges on strengthening partnerships in the education sector development cooperation. One academic interviewee stated: “Potentially, NGOs are very powerful, but compared to private partners such as those running schools, NGOs tend to be seen as a threat and not recognised by government through the Ministry of Education as true partners who deserve more involvement in policy formulation and decision-making. The answer lies in opening up doors wider to NGOs to do more in the education sector”. In fact, what is needed in order to strengthen these partnerships is to focus on the following main issues that have been identified in this research: increasing consultation of NGOs, increasing involvement of NGOs in education policy, minimising dependency on donors, and maximising implementation of education policy in order to maximise positive impact on the education sector. It is suffice just to mention these issues at this stage as they will be exemplified in detail in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **NGOs in the Education Policy Field**

#### **8.0. Introduction**

This final chapter addresses the research questions raised in chapters one and four. Despite the importance of the influence of NGOs on the achievement of EFA goals, there had been no systematic study done to investigate the role of NGOs in Basic Education in policy reform in Lusaka province of Zambia. This study fills the void. This chapter begins with a summary of the main research findings and the recommendations, which are followed by the researcher's concluding remarks. The chapter ends with suggestions on areas for future research.

#### **8.1. The main research findings**

As a reminder to the reader, this research is looking at the role of NGOs in education policy at the Basic education level in Lusaka province of Zambia. The research was an investigation of whether the participation of NGOs in Basic Education policy reform can enhance the achievement of the EFA goals. The summary of the main findings are presented below following various themes outlined in chapter 4 and guided by the research questions.

## **8.2. The role of NGOs in the Education Sector in Zambia**

The findings from this study reveal that NGOs play a key role in Basic Education Policy Reform in Zambia. This research indicates that the majority of NGOs in Zambia are involved in education service delivery. Some are involved in advocacy. While others focus on both service delivery and advocacy. Through service delivery, NGOs have been involved in the implementation of the Basic Education Policy Reform by contributing to Basic education development in school construction, provision of textbooks and desks, and paying school fees for school children. Through advocacy, NGOs seek to reach government in order to influence education policy reform and its implementation practices. There is no doubt this has improved school attendance. However, problems of access, retention and quality in education have continued and the problem of access to schooling is more problematic at grades 8 and 9 (upper basic school level). This is because most parents cannot afford to pay school fees for their children and NGOs support only a small number of children. These research findings indicate that the number of children supported by NGOs is small mainly because of insufficient funding.

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NGOs use advocacy for national policy changes in order to advance specific interests. NGOs were of the view that they play a role in education policy in order to address social injustice issues, promote the attainment of Education for All goals, defend human rights and make the government accountable to its citizenry. This view from NGOs is in line with the Human Interests Approach to education. It was noted in chapter 2 that the Human Interests Approach considers education as a human right. However, in practice, NGOs are supporting the Human Capital Approach to education which regards education as a form of 'human capital' that is able to produce high returns of economic growth thereby bringing about development and



poverty reduction (see Schultz, 1993). These research findings reveal that NGOs' activities in Zambia are closely linked to the official national education policy (Educating Our Future, 1996), as was noted in chapter 7 is based on neo-liberal policies with education seen as an avenue for human capital formation. Additionally, these research findings suggest that NGOs support neo-liberal policies, perhaps unwittingly, promoted by most of their international funders, such as USAID due to their dependence on international aid. It was noted in chapter 2 that neo-liberal policies exacerbate inequities in education. The problem is that in a market-driven society such as in Zambia, the poor or low-income families cannot afford to pay school fees for their children especially from grade 8 onwards, but the richer families can afford not only to pay school fees for their children but also to send them to good schools where they receive good quality education. As the United Nations Development Programme (2001) noted twelve years ago, when the market goes too far in dominating social and political outcomes, the opportunities and rewards of globalisation spread unequally and inequitably – concentrating power and wealth in the hands of a select group of people, nations and corporations, marginalising the other. When the profit motives of market players get out of hand, they challenge people's ethics-and sacrifice respect for justice and human rights (United Nations Development Programme , 2001) This is true even today in the case of Zambia.

### **8.3. NGO-Government Interaction in the Education Policy Field**

The findings from this study indicate that the relationship between government and NGOs is fundamental to policy formulation and implementation. This research has identified five main issues in the NGO-Government relationship in the Education Policy Arena. These are consultation, involvement in education policy, implementation of education policy, impact on policy and dependency on donors. They are discussed in detail below:

#### **8.3.1. Consultation**

The research findings indicate that for the local NGOs, the government mainly consulted with distinguished and big NGOs such as Tona and Zona. Therefore, the length of service, size and composition of NGOs play a role in getting invitations and contracts from government. For example, as indicated in chapter 5, Tona has been promoting the education of girls and women since the 1990s (17 years now). Tona is often invited by government to attend meetings. Apart from the length of service, Tona has gained a solid reputation and credibility for its work which makes it a reference point when policy issues with regards to gender are being discussed. The government is content to invite Tona as it has observed that this NGO offers solutions to educational problems. Zona, an umbrella organisation representing 50 NGOs is invited most times to attend meetings by government because of its large size (Fieldwork, 2011). Therefore, it is apparent that the government feels bound to invite Zona to attend meetings as its sentiments are taken to represent the views of NGOs.

For the international NGOs invitation by the government for consultations is almost straightforward. This is due to the following three factors which I refer to as NGO characteristics: firstly, because of size and composition of NGOs, INGOs in most cases are

bigger than the local and national NGOs. This is because of the international coverage that INGOs have. Secondly, with regards to the length of service, INGOs were found to have more experience in the education sector than many national NGOs. The majority of INGOs working in the education sector started in the 1980s (Oxfam started in 1980, and Save the Children in 1983) (Fieldwork, 2011)), while many of the national NGOs began in the 1990s and 2000s. Tona and Shaba, for example, started in the 1990s, and Zona commenced in 2001 (Fieldwork, 2010). Having more experience is an advantage to INGOs as it has enabled them to be skilled and well-informed about educational issues in Zambia. This gives the government confidence to consult them about educational issues. Thirdly, in relation to availability of funding, INGOs are seen to be financially stable. The fact that they appear financially sound gives them the status and cause to be called upon. This is because INGOs use their financial resources to support schools and some local NGOs. For example, Oxfam is funding Zambia Open Community Schools (a local NGO) which supports community schools. Save the Children is funding ZANEC which is involved in the education sector.

However, in conversation with NGO officers, there were complaints that the government does not consult them widely enough. NGO officers explained that most often the government would consult NGOs only to obtain ideas about a particular situation but when the final decisions about that situation are made, they are not invited. Besides, smaller and national or local NGOs, which are not prominent, are not invited to any policy discussion meetings by government.

Therefore, the research findings suggest that the government consults NGOs only at a minimal level. Though this research has found that government officials are of the view that

the partnership between government and NGOs was working well, the majority of the NGOs did not support this view. It was noted by respondents from NGOs that they were only called upon in policy discussions at the discretion of the government. It is suggested that effective partnership between government and NGOs entails more involvement of NGOs in policy formulation and decision-making. It was argued in chapter 6 that mere consultation of NGOs is not partnership at all. "... 'consultation' is not partnership" (Klees, 2009:111). In chapter 5, I noted that real NGO participation and consultation in policy discussion processes in Zambia was seen as superficial as most NGOs felt they were invited for meetings by government only to rubberstamp what the government had decided already.

### **8.3.2. Involvement in Policy Reform**

It was noted in chapter 5 that NGOs are involved in policy through their roles as service providers and policy advocates. It is apparent this study shows that NGOs tend to have greater access to communities and better understand local needs than the government. NGOs often perform more effectively than government in certain basic matters like mobilising community participation. For example, NGOs have worked well in mobilising community participation in the construction of girls' hostels and drilling of boreholes for rural schools. However, the government has a broader coverage than do NGOs. The government aims to reach the entire society while NGOs have more restricted and localised perspectives.

These research findings suggest that the scope of the role of NGOs in policy-making and implementation is highly dependent on the discretion of the government, at least at the outset. The role of NGOs in relation to the government is seen as a kind of relationship where they

are regarded on one hand as a kind of interest group feeding information into the policy process and highlighting issues of concern. On the other hand, NGOs are seen as having a presence on the ground and therefore are important in the implementation of policy. However, decision-making itself is seen as the legitimate concern only of government authorities.

This thesis has established that NGOs are embedded in a network of national and international actors. The way in which these networks, hidden agendas of various actors, relations of power between donors, governments and NGOs help, hamper or even hijack purported social development aims, in education for example. This study found that NGOs are typically weaker because they are not as financially independent as the government and donors are often dependent upon them. NGOs typically do not have the resources and political power that the other two sets of actors wield, and are not as well and long established as the state and donor agencies.

### **8.3.3. Implementation of education policy**

As seen already, most NGOs are playing a role in implementing education policy in Basic education by service delivery in schools. Some NGOs donated textbooks to schools and assisted with the construction of classroom blocks and teachers' houses. This has undoubtedly improved school attendance. However, this study revealed that not every child of school-going age was in school and the quality of education in the majority of basic schools was poor.

#### **8.3.4. Impact on policy**

This study has revealed that NGOs in Zambia seem not to have performed substantially in the area of influencing Education Policy-Making and Policy Change. Despite the NGOs' educational activities, there is only one tangible policy, the Re-entry Policy, which is a result of NGO pressure on government. The Re-entry Policy permits girls who fall pregnant to go back to school after delivery.

The findings from this study indicate that there are few advocacy NGOs in Zambia. Many International NGOs work through their partner local/national NGOs to do advocacy work. Through interviews with NGO officers and observations it has been found that only two NGOs are active in advocacy in Zambia. The rest of the NGOs though they claim that they are also involved in advocacy, were found to have a dormant advocacy role. In practice they do not advocate at all. Hence, in these NGOs, advocacy remains mere rhetoric whereby there are no clear strategies put in place to do advocacy, no strong alliances and coalitions with other actors, and failure to provide alternative solutions for 'accepted beliefs' (orthodoxies). This research has shown that there are few advocacy NGOs in Zambia because of costs associated with advocacy and lack of capacity among most local NGOs.

The strength of the NGO voice has been reduced, this study makes apparent. Following the shift to a multi-party democratic system in the 1990s, when the voice of NGOs carried weight, the situation is different now as their voice has lost strength. This study has revealed that this is due to a capacity problem among many NGOs, with many having little experience in advocacy roles. There is also the fear of losing jobs among some NGO members due to

their connection with government officials. Also, the negative attitudes of government officials at times, results in frustrating the efforts of NGOs.

The capacity problem among many NGOs addressing education in Zambia, has hindered the majority of them from taking on advocacy roles. Additionally, according to interview data with NGO officers, some NGO members fear to speak out strongly or to give divergent views when things are going wrong in the education sector for fear of losing jobs. However, this situation was only found at one NGO (a national NGO). Moreover, field observations showed that sometimes government officials display negative attitudes towards NGOs as partners in development. This undoubtedly discourages some NGOs from engaging in advocacy.

In addition, this thesis has established that the methods that the NGOs use in advocacy in order to reach government are insufficient. A combination of insufficient methods and lack of capacity among NGOs means that the educational needs of many children - which need to be addressed through influencing policy- have not been met. This is especially problematic as NGOs are supposed to promote educational needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

With regards to access to education, the study found that there have been improvements. This research found that a number of NGOs have assisted with getting children into school and have assisted with constructing some classroom blocks for example. The government has also supported some infrastructural development in terms of building basic schools. Despite these efforts, the problems of access continue. There are still children who are not in school due to lack of school fees especially those who are supposed to be in grade 8 onwards. It has to be

noted that putting up infrastructure and getting children into school are not enough without providing them with a trained and qualified teacher as well as adequate teaching and learning resources for example. The study found that in many basic schools there are shortages of trained and qualified teachers as recruitment of teachers by government is slow. All these factors account towards for the poor quality of education in many basic schools in Zambia. Hence, it may be stated that it is unlikely that Zambia will be able to enrol all out-of-school children and ensure that all children in basic schools receive good quality education by 2015. This finding was in line with Lewin and Little (2011) who pointed out,

Access to education for all children is far from being achieved in many low- income countries. Despite gains in enrolments related to Education for All (EFA) programmes, many countries will not achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for universal participation and gender equity in education by 2015 (Lewin and Little , 2011:333).

Indeed, I reiterate what was noted in chapter 2 that the EFA agenda remains deficient to addressing the enormous educational challenges in developing countries. Since EFA represents a compromise between neo-liberal economic priorities and social democratic principles as it was seen in chapter 2, educational needs of the majority of children remain unmet. This is because though neo-liberal advocates such as the World Bank and IMF appear to alleviate poverty, their policies such as the free market economy packaged in SAPs are enhancing poverty which is working against the development of education in Zambia. It was seen in chapter 7 that market driven policies have led to the reduction of income of most families in Zambia due to the decline of the agricultural sector and retrenchments. To worsen the situation, in a free market economy, government spending on public services such as



education has reduced. Therefore, although, the Ministry of Education in Zambia has mentioned in its official education policy that it will provide bursaries to vulnerable and orphan children in schools (Ministry of Education, 1996), in reality, as revealed by this research, bursaries were not provided by government to children in basic schools. The findings from this study indicate that even though NGOs have stepped in to assist vulnerable children, their support is not strong as it is normally short term with little or no sense of planning for long-term. Also, their support has focused on particular issues such as girls and gendered access to and retention in education. Indeed, there seem, to be no coherence and consistency in the support provided by NGOs.

#### **8.3.5. Dependency on donors**

This section examines the dependence on international aid agencies by NGOs and government as revealed by this research.

##### **a) NGOs**

The research findings indicate that the majority of NGOs in Zambia depend on external funding. They depend on donor agencies such as bilateral organisations and international NGOs in the case of local and national NGOs. The same bilateral agencies supporting NGOs in the education sector are the ones supporting the government through the Ministry of Education of Zambia.

These findings suggest that donor organisations do provide strategic funding in the education sector to both NGOs and the Ministry of Education in Zambia. This is where the donor

organisations specify to the recipients how the money should be used. This is in cases where donor organisations have a specific area/areas of education that they want to see addressed.

This research revealed that when choosing which NGOs to fund, donors look at those NGOs that have programmes which are similar to their own. Basically, NGO programmes have to be in line with what donors are doing, rather than the opposite - whereby donors are asked to support NGOs' mission/cause even if it is not linked to donor programmes. These findings indicated that the decision about what to support in the education sector is driven more by what the funder has to offer than what the recipient actually needs or even wants. Thus, furthering the agenda of the donor is a primary consideration when supplying aid to NGOs. As Silova and Steiner-Khamsi (2008:5) correctly put it:

Each and every international organisation has its own country assistance strategy. Where those organisations operate and what they fund reflects, more often than not, organisational logic rather than local needs.

NGO-donor relations have been defined through one of a number of contexts. Firstly, donors have requested proposals from NGOs to implement a particular programme. Often NGOs have competed for funding by submitting proposals to donors. Secondly, another mechanism is where a contract is signed between a donor and an NGO based on their negotiations. In this case a donor may request an NGO to prepare an education programme that is relevant to donor objectives, or an NGO submits an uncalled-for proposal to a donor asking for financial support with the argument that its existing approach to education is consistent with the donor's objectives.

The research findings indicate that NGOs, especially local NGOs, compete for funding. This has contributed to the NGOs' failure to form effective networks in Zambia. As a result, there is tremendous amount of wasteful duplication among NGOs. This is because NGOs withhold information from each other especially information with regards to funding. As a result NGOs are compelled to follow donor specifications in order to keep their funding. As Dolhinow (2005:559) points out: "As NGO funding becomes more competitive, NGOs often find they must follow donor agendas in order to keep their funding". Since Overseas Development Assistance by donors is channelled directly to NGOs, they find themselves in competition with each other over funds and contracts from donors. This high dependency on donor aid challenges the proclaimed independence of NGOs, and might question their transformative potential. Since NGOs are dependent on international donor funding, they have put at risk their ability to speak out on important issues such as the negative effects of neo-liberal policies on education, their autonomy to identify projects based on local input, and their general freedom of action. NGOs have found themselves responding to donor demands and guidelines rather than to the needs of the local communities. One might suggest that they seem to "act as agents of ...global economic forces" (Ilon, 2008:16). This is because some NGOs may surrogate effective local strategies to transform adverse conditions with less effective short term solutions aligned to aims and preferences of donor agencies. In such circumstances, claims of NGOs to be accountable to communities to which they work become questionable as the focus for loyalty and accountability apparently shifts towards donors and long-term funding arrangements (Szporluk, 2009).

Additionally, this dependency may hinder the willingness and ability of NGOs to critique the development discourse in donor countries (Ng, 2006) - a discourse that may be instrumental in the perpetuation of existing inequalities in the education sector. One may argue that the

dependency by NGOs on donor funding may sideline critical discussions of poverty and educational problems such as inequality that cause the need for financial assistance in the first place.

This study has found that donor representatives indicated that often it is easier to work with NGOs than with government to attain the same result. It may be argued that donor organisations find it easier to negotiate with NGOs than with government because they have exceptional leverage over NGOs who receive their support. Besides, the political hurdles and bureaucratic hierarchies of negotiating with government are absent when dealing with NGOs.

When donors give money to NGOs, the former want to see immediate results. As a result, NGOs will focus on projects which will show quick results. This is just resolving the educational problems in the short term, but the long term leaves much to be desired. For example, focusing on access because the number of children in school can be counted but the quality of education is not tackled by many NGOs. It may be argued that in order to attain the EFA goals, it is not only about putting children in school but it is also about ensuring that real learning is taking place in school. For example, there has been an increase in the number of community schools to 2,162 in 2005 (Ministry of Education, 2006) and as indicated in chapter 5, this may have improved access to Basic education but the quality of education remains poor. This study found that in community schools the majority of teachers were untrained, the infrastructure was dilapidated and inadequate, and there were insufficient teaching and learning materials.

All the Stakeholders, the donors, government officials, headteachers, teachers and community members interviewed for this study acknowledged the work of NGOs in the education sector. Stakeholders recognised the role played by NGOs in improving access to education by building school infrastructure such as classroom blocks or helping to pay school fees for disadvantaged and vulnerable children. Field observations revealed that NGOs attempt to change local communities' attitudes to participating in the education system. For example, encouraging parents to send their children to school and fund school activities (Field notes, 25/11/2010). Without impinging forces in their work, NGOs can assist in building bridges between donors, government, and communities.

However, the relationship between NGOs and donors is not on an equal basis. NGOs often negotiate with donors from a standpoint of relative weakness as they do not have adequate resources. Therefore, NGOs have found themselves aligning their education agenda to that of donors.

b) Government

The findings from this study indicate that over the past few years, most development aid to Zambia has been given in the form of "project support" whereby the country and a donor agreed on a specific project to fund (Fieldwork, 2011). The 1990s saw the dawn of the neo-liberal era in Zambia and, as discussed in chapter 2, there has been a gradual shift from the project mode to Sub-sector and Sector-wide Approaches. In chapter 5 it was noted that in the 1990s the Ministry of Education in Zambia with the support of donors embarked on Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme which ran from 1999 to 2002 (Musonda, 2003). Here, the focus was primary education. This was a World Bank supported programme (Alasuutari and Rasanen, 2007). Indeed, as reported previously on a number of occasions, the

World Bank sets the global agenda for education. As Packalen (2007:27) notes: “Two prominent sources for the global agenda on education have been the World Bank (WB) and the EFA process”.

Even though all the donor representations indicated that in policy discussions with government they play an advisory role and that the country owns the development process and Ministry of Education officials of Zambia claimed that since the move from focusing on projects to SWAps, they now decide programmes to focus on (Fieldwork, 2011), in reality this is not the case. Under SWAps and in the Joint Assistance Strategy, the Ministry of Education in Zambia is required to prepare an annual work plan including the budget which is subject for approval by donors. This is the rhetoric of ownership as donor organisations using their funds decide the direction of the development process. It may be argued that the country ownership that is being publicised in policy dialogue is one of the new languages that emerged as a result of SWAps. As Klees (2009:112) points out:

Country ownership implies that the policy dialogue is actually directed by the aid recipient and that all choices about the nature and conditions of aid reflect country sovereignty . From this perspective, countries that are recipients of aid are the dominant partner in all endeavours. In a world of vastly unequal wealth and power, where recipient nations are desperate for aid, the language and discourse surrounding policy dialogue and country ownership forms an ideological bulwark that is far from the reality on the ground.

Due to Zambia's dependence on external aid, donor agencies have consolidated their power in a subtle way. As Klees (2009:113) notes:

The real consequence of SWAps is that forcing consensus on a sector programme makes donor power stronger and more monolithic. Aid recipients become even less able to find space to follow their own agendas, which they did previously, for example, by taking advantage of the different agendas of donors, sometimes even playing one donor off against another.

The Ministry of Education in Zambia is also using the new rhetoric and language widespread among global players in its education agenda in order to deal with global forces. The government of Zambia has learnt to speak the language of donors in order to secure a loan or a grant for policy reforms. Therefore, it is using a kind of "soft" governance mechanism such as language to secure funding from donors and to deal with external policy pressure. In return, global players, particularly international organisations have demanded that the Zambian government should introduce privatisation, liberalisation, decentralisation, revitalised partnerships and should adhere to EFA and MDG targets. Indeed, giving in to such demands by the government of Zambia has brought in the neo-liberal agenda in the country. Liberalisation of education has led to cost-sharing which has resulted in charging of user fees and impoverished parents are unable to send their children to school which has effectively denied children access to education.

I reiterate what was mentioned in chapter 2 that marketisation of education promoted by neo-liberals has failed. Education is not intended to exclude others from acquiring it but the market excludes others from possession as it is based on competition. Hence, the market yields inequalities. Klees (2009) explains that while the market is a convenience that future societies may continue to use for some purposes, it has fundamental defects that render its widespread use problematic. He explains that firstly, it contributes to an abrogation of social responsibility, as presently, when market outcomes of horrendous inequality or environmental destruction are viewed as natural and not anyone's fault. Secondly, he mentions that markets are fragile. Indeed, markets are not reliable as they are prone to failure. And this is exactly what is happening in Zambia which has a current education policy influenced by the World Bank, as noted in chapter 6, the current education policy document (Educating Our Future) in Zambia was prepared based on evaluation studies whose funding came from the World Bank and bilateral donor agencies. One may argue that the current education policy itself has contributed to the worsening of poverty levels in the country and inequality in the education system in Zambia. As Klees (2009:117) points out: "A neoliberal economy has fundamental inconsistencies that render it problematic at best, absurd at worst". And Situmbeko and Zulu (2004:12) suggest:

...it is time to fundamentally rethink the role of the IMF and World Bank. It is not acceptable that these institutions have effective control over policy-making in countries like Zambia. Policies need to be developed which are genuinely home grown alternatives that put the Zambian people, especially the poor, first.



It was argued earlier that NGOs' agendas are being driven by donor organisations because donors are the main source of support. I found that the same argument could be extended to the government of Zambia as it depends largely on external resources. Even though the government of Zambia claims autonomy in policy formulation and change, the reality of the situation is that the donors' influence is usually a factor to contend with. It is common knowledge that "he who pays the piper calls the tune".<sup>13</sup> Stromquist (2002:64) explains: "To receive external support certainly creates a risk for the development of nationalistic agendas, the successful negotiation of priorities will be function of the integrity of the recipient party".

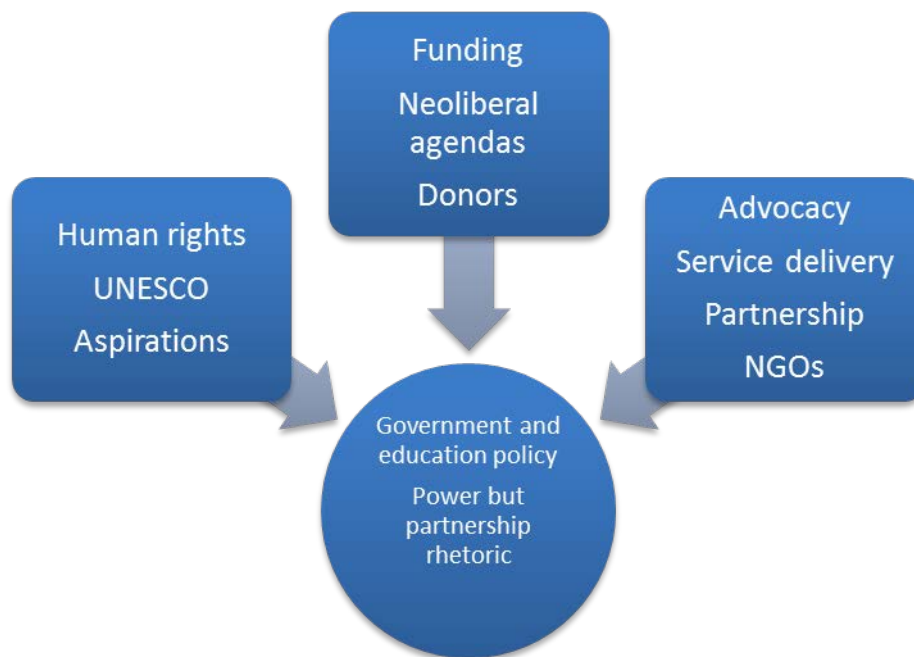
The findings from this study suggest that there are power differentials among these three actors: donors, government and NGOs. The differences arise because of differences in resource levels, operational capacity, and political clout. These are particularly important in cases where donor agencies are funding the implementation of the Sector-Wide Approach programmes of the Ministry of Education and NGO projects and/ or programmes in Zambia.

Also, the government of Zambia is in a significantly more powerful position in relation to NGOs as it has political power and large operational capacity. As a result, the objectives of the relatively stronger partner tend to prevail.

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13. A saying that suggests the individual who is paying for something will control what happens

Figure 4 below shows the contribution of donors and NGOs to the policy development process in their interactions with the government of Zambia.



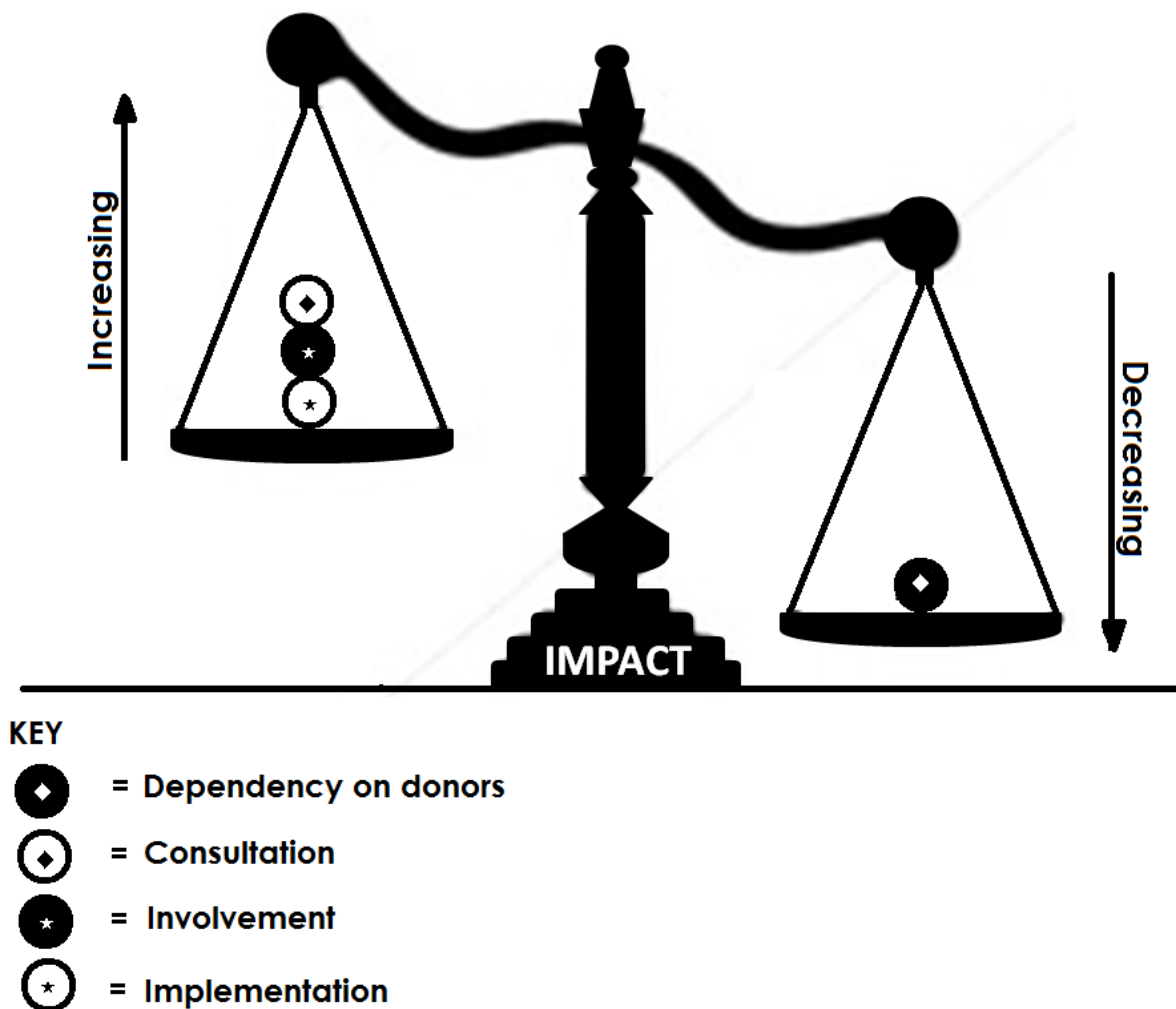
**Figure 4: Input into the policy development process by NGOs and donors including UNESCO in the education sector**

**Source:** Produced by this researcher

- NGOs contribute to the policy development processes through their advocacy and service delivery roles
- Donors seem to fund neo-liberal agendas which flow into the policy development processes
- UNESCO feeds into the policy development processes through the funding that it provides to the government with the view of promoting human rights
- The Government of Zambia appears to have power in education policy development but policy direction seems to be determined by donors since they fund the major policy process and implementation. Policy Partnership is rhetoric.

One may suggest that in the interactions among NGOs, government and donors, the following need to be done: maximising consultation of NGOs, maximising involvement of NGOs in education policy formulation, maximising implementation of education policies and minimising dependency on donors. It is argued that this will undoubtedly have a positive impact on education policies.

Figure 5 below shows the ideal interaction that is needed between NGOs and Government vis-a-vis donors in order to bring about effective impact on education policies.



**Figure 5: Balance in the relationship among identified elements that determine effective impact on Education Policy**

**Source:** Produced by this researcher

#### **8.4. Maximising Consultation**

The government of Zambia and NGOs should institute effective lines of communication. In order to do this NGOs should regularly expose the government to their innovations and achievements. Familiarity with NGO programmes and results will build trust, which will have a positive effect on government-NGO relations. The government will also need to integrate the value-added of innovations into their policies and practices and encourage the participation of NGOs in policy-making and change. If the government is only willing to accept that NGOs work in areas where it is unable or does not want to commit resources, then the outcome is less effective than a collaborative effort that would affect the entire education sector.

In this government-NGO partnership, the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of each actor must be clearly defined. It is suggested that government and NGOs need to devise a collaborative consultative process to outline the roles and responsibilities of NGOs in the field of education. Additionally, in order to mitigate the imprecision of the role of NGOs in the education sector, there is need for a clear policy on the part of government especially concerning its relations with NGOs. This will help in having a mutually beneficial alliance between government and NGOs as they can identify, learn from, and pursue effective partnership mechanisms.

##### **8.4.1. Maximising Involvement**

It is argued that NGO involvement in education policy must be maximised. The government needs to open its doors wider to NGOs. Government officials seem to have accepted the idea

that NGOs can and should play a role in education policy. What government officials say in theory about their working in partnership with NGOs should be seen also in practice. This is central if NGOs are to fulfil their potential functions in contributing to the EFA goals.

Based on the research findings, it is argued that government should not see NGOs as a threat, as if they are in competition, as the scope of NGOs will never be of such magnitude as to allow them to release the government from its responsibilities. NGOs felt that they only complement government efforts in education provision. Many NGOs work on the principle that the government should fulfil its obligations and be held accountable for the actions it takes or fails to take.

On the other hand, NGOs should be innovative. It is evident that NGOs should exploit those openings that allow them to interact with policy-makers. Zambia has democratised and the decentralisation process is continuing. The opportunities for government-NGO interactions must surely increase, as will the possibilities for NGOs to engage with government. NGOs should take advantage of such opportunities to access policy-making processes. They need to learn to take advantage of key moments such as elections, changes in leadership or senior government officials. NGOs need to strengthen their advocacy in policy in order to yield results which bring about improvement in the education sector (This will be explained in greater detail later in the next section). But in the meantime, it is important to mention that to mitigate the capacity problem of local NGOs, international NGOs and other donor organisations should provide technical assistance and training especially in advocacy in areas such as language skills, networking skills, and research and policy analysis.

#### **8.4.2. Maximising Implementation**

Findings from this study indicate that, indeed, NGOs are involved in the implementation of the Basic Education Policy Reform in Zambia. But NGOs need to strike a balance between education service delivery and advocacy. This study found that NGO service delivery alone has not benefited many people as the number of the marginalised children supported by NGOs was small, mainly due to NGO financial challenges. What is needed in order to deliver significant change in the lives of underprivileged children is for NGOs to strengthen their policy advocacy role thereby assisting in addressing the root causes of injustices. In this way, it is hoped that tangible benefits would be seen in the communities in which NGOs serve. Indeed, as some argue, giving aid to the poor and marginalised people is only treating the symptoms and not the root cause, namely ‘social exclusion’ (Coates and David, 2002:530). It was noted in chapter 2 that though neo-liberal policies appear to promote equities in education, in reality, their policies exclude others, mainly the poor from acquiring education.

Paradoxically, if NGOs are to yield meaningful results in implementing their programmes, they need financial assistance. This research revealed that NGOs, particularly, local NGOs do not have a large or sound domestic funding base. Therefore, one may suggest that international donors should consider giving aid to NGOs with no strings attached. As seen above, aid with conditionalities attached is not working as the poor are not adequately catered for. This is because NGOs have to follow donor requirements on how funds are utilised. If donors want to work with NGOs, one might suggest they work more closely with NGOs before determining their own education agenda. This would enable them to take into account the local needs of the grassroots and that would help to lay the foundations for the success of

their various programmes. Also, donors need to avoid demanding immediate results from NGOs thereby overshadowing the local needs of the indigenous population.

Alternatively, NGOs can reject donor funding if they find that it has heavy conditionalities. This is explained in detail later in this chapter that NGOs can seek out domestic resources which do not require them to compromise their education programmes in order to benefit the local people.

#### **8.4.3. Minimising Dependency on donors**

There is need for both NGOs and government to reduce dependence on international donor funding. Rather than relying on external funding, NGOs need to become inward-looking and take responsibility for raising their own funds. NGOs need to make themselves sustainable, for example, by initiating income-generating projects. NGOs can raise their funds through private donations, membership fees, non-profit entrepreneurship, and depend more on unpaid voluntary work. Though difficult as it may seem for a low-income country such as Zambia, progress in the direction of this alternative would bring about autonomy among NGOs in relation to both the government and donor organisations.

In order, to avoid dependence on donors, the government of Zambia could allocate more of its own resources to education and ensure that these resources are used effectively. In those situations where additional external funding may be needed, this must not undermine the country's ability to design its own education policy frameworks. External funding should be used very selectively and only be accepted if it is given without conditions, especially of neo-liberalism as in the form of reduced budget allocations and cost recovery mechanisms.

External funding should only be accepted if it supports ethical, pro-poor, national educational processes that will improve education outcomes.

Indeed, there is an evident and dramatic need to reduce dependence on donor agencies and for the government of Zambia to take control of their own policies and planning processes. External funding and expertise should only be accepted if they play a supportive and not a decision-making role. The situation whereby donors and government officials jointly decide on budget priorities as revealed by the findings of this research is unacceptable because as noted previously donors are often in a stronger position and the resultant policy decisions are not necessarily in the best interests of the country.



## **8.5. NGOs in Basic Education Improvement in Zambia: Strengthening the role of NGOs**

The findings from this study indicate that NGOs use advocacy as a tool to attempt to influence policy. However, NGOs have not done substantial work in education provision as the number of school children supported by NGOs was small and therefore, access, equity and quality problems in basic education continue. One may suggest that NGOs in Zambia need to re-double their efforts in order to have much influence on policy decisions otherwise what they hope to achieve might be thwarted. Participating in government policy change and the way that policy is formulated is perhaps the most effective way to ensure the success and sustainability of NGO interventions. Therefore, NGOs especially those involved only in service delivery in schools need to take a strategic decision to combine service delivery with policy and people -centered advocacy. Hence, NGOs need to initiate a research and advocacy programme aimed at promoting national development alternatives in Zambia. This programme must seek to critically review the neo-liberal policy measures promoted largely by the international donor community. As noted earlier, these policies impact negatively on the poor and they fail to promote accountability by the state to its citizens. A programme should also instil civil activism through rights awareness creation, rights promotion and defence and economic literacy.

Based on these research findings there is need for NGOs to address the deepest roots of injustice not merely mention them. Advocacy needs to tackle the structural problem in order to achieve long-term structural change that benefits the local population. Thus, NGOs need to continue pressing for change and justice for out-of-school children. Also, pressing for quality education. NGOs need to advocate for national development alternatives rather than

remaining mute on the neo-liberal policy measures promoted largely by the international donor community. A strong voice in policy among NGOs is required.

A strong voice in the formulation and design of policies requires strong operational capacity of NGOs. They need to upgrade and update their professional and organisational capacities such as financial and marketing to become effective partners with the government. Thus, NGOs need training, information and technical assistance that can contribute to the process of capacity-building. NGOs need to improve their capacity in order to understand the process of policy formulation and implementation. With such a solid understanding they will be capable of playing an effective role in education policy in support of only those national education policies which encourage improvement in education in areas such as access, equity and quality.

The following strategies can assist NGOs in carrying out advocacy works:

- Holding a number of closed round-table meetings with government officials (without involving the media so as to build trust). Also, building up good relationships with government officers in order to win acceptance. The rigorous use of evidence and cultivation of contacts with a number of decision-makers and government officials.
- NGOs should hold conferences on a regular basis. Conferences can be used as a powerful advocacy method for NGOs, enabling stakeholders to share their voices, make contacts and influence education policy.

Additionally, NGOs need to build strong networks among themselves to create opportunities for collective action and joint advocacy which will help them in policy reform. The bigger NGOs should take up the responsibility for co-opting smaller organisations as partners and should help them in building their capacities to perform roles such as policy advocacy and social audit. Networking among NGOs is important not only for potential joint action but also for sharing and dissemination of experiences.

NGO advocacy is vital as it enhances the self-respect of the marginalised groups who are normally not heard. It empowers them in claiming their space in the political area. Since NGOs are considered to be close to the grass-roots, NGOs can be an effective channel for local voices to be heard and have an influence on the policy process. Public participation and policy advocacy for education need to be strengthened by all stakeholders, government, donors and the private sector, at the regional and national levels to ensure all the voices especially of the poor are taken into account in the policy formulation process.

In order to disseminate information to the government and other stakeholders, NGOs need to produce a journal, for example once a week, which is outspoken on educational issues. Publications produced need to promote quality education through mass media in raising public awareness, dialogue, discussion and action. NGOs need to freely give divergent opinions on issues aimed at improving the provision of basic education.

For NGOs to have a meaningful impact on basic education development, they need to make their programmes sustainable. As noted, NGOs need stable sources for core financing rather

than depending on donor funding which can be unreliable. These research findings reveal that NGO projects disappear when donor funding finishes. Coombs and Ahmed's statement made 37 years ago is as true today as it was then. They said 'All over the developing world there are graveyards of abortive pilot projects long since forgotten by those who first inspired them (who are often too busy with the next crop of pilots to conduct revealing post-mortems on their earlier attempts; hence errors are often repeated)' (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 181). In Zambia as NGOs move from one project to another depending on availability of funding, there is a wealth of "abortive pilot projects".

In addition, this study showed that most NGOs are urban-based and that their activities serve more children living in those rural areas located near urban areas than those in remote rural areas. In order to maximise the contributions of NGOs to EFA goals, NGOs need to go deep into rural areas which are normally not served by the government. These research findings also suggest that NGOs did not consult the local communities extensively when initiating and implementing education programmes. For NGOs to have considerable effect on basic educational development, national NGOs need to consult local people at all the stages of educational programme identification, formation and implementation. This will help NGOs to work in line with community needs. This means local NGOs instead of international NGOs should define or certainly be centrally involved in defining, education programmes and priorities, not just in carrying out the work defined by others as sub-contractors.

In order to avoid suspicion and frustration from government, NGOs need to publicise of their activities. NGOs need to increasingly expose their innovations to government. NGOs can invite the government regularly to see what they are doing. They can also invite the government to monitor their programmes. This can help in building acceptance and trust

between NGOs and the government thereby enhancing cooperation to achieve productive outcomes in the education sector.

Indeed, NGOs need to nurture and manage relations with different stakeholders such as government and resource agencies. For NGOs to maintain relationships with other actors, they also require skills such as networking skills and capacity-building, especially where NGOs have unequal relations with other actors such as government and donors.

## **8.6. Concluding Remarks**

The role of NGOs in influencing education policy reform is significant in terms of ensuring that education is provided to every child of school-going age. The fact that they are called upon by government, shows that their presence is recognised as they assist the government in the provision of education. NGOs in Zambia should consider seizing such opportunities to seek policy change and implementation. It might be helpful if NGOs can speak up against neo-liberal policies in their advocacy. The problem with NGOs in Zambia is their high dependency on international donor aid which makes them vulnerable. Essentially NGOs are supposed to serve the needs of the local community. However, the majority have found themselves carrying out the economic programmes of donors and lending agencies. This is mainly due to the conditions attached to external aid. In this way, NGOs unwittingly help neo-liberal forces by following the agenda of donors, as noted already.

The government of Zambia, because of its indebtedness, has found itself accepting neo-liberal policies in education which are wrapped up in aid packages. Thus, the partnership among NGOs, government and donors is rhetoric as it is been driven primarily by resource priorities. As a result NGOs are unable to effectively meet the educational needs of the local people. There are still children of school-going age who are not in school and the quality of education in many basic schools is poor in Zambia. In reality World Bank policies deny children an education. NGOs can contribute effectively to educational developments if only they can detach themselves from the influence of multilateral and bilateral development agencies whose goals it has been argued in these chapters are mainly market oriented. NGOs should start weaning themselves off international donor aid and be inward looking by raising their own funds so as to make themselves sustainable. NGOs should also make their voices

heard more loudly and more frequently through advocacy and lobbying in order to have substantial impact on policy change and implementation so as to contribute to the achievement of Education for All in Zambia.

### **8.7. Areas for Further Research**

NGOs are involved in the education sector, and this research has identified that NGOs in Zambia appear not to meet educational needs of the local people adequately; I recommend that further research should focus on an assessment of how NGOs work and engage with the disadvantaged and vulnerable people in their local communities in relation to education provision in Zambia.

The other area recommended for further research should focus on the strategies and scaling-up of educational NGOs in Zambia with a view of balancing service delivery and advocacy. This study is necessary because this research has identified the failure of some NGOs to strike a balance between service delivery and advocacy which thereby inhibits them from meeting sufficiently the needs of children of school going age. This is because they do not adequately facilitate that the voice of the disadvantaged people is heard by policy-makers such as high ranking government officials.

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## **Appendix A: Interview Guides**

### **Semi- Structured Interview Guide for National NGOs Officers in Zambia**

1. Have you always worked in the Education Sector?
2. For how long have you worked in the Education Sector?
3. Who are your target groups?
4. What are the factors that hinder school aged children from accessing education in a) rural areas? b) urban areas?
5. Are you involved in education policy making in Zambia?
6. Are you involved in the implementation of the Basic Education policy?
7. Have you had significant impact on policy decisions in the Basic Education Sector in Zambia? Any examples?
8. How has NGO engagement in the area of education policy affected access to basic education?
9. How has NGO engagement in the area of education policy affected the quality of basic education?
10. What are the problems and challenges that you are facing in the implementation of the Basic Education Policy i.e. in trying to ensure that every school aged child enter and complete a full cycle of good quality basic education?
11. Suggest measures that would address the identified constraints/challenges in order to enhance Non-Organisations' participation in Basic Education Policy.

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH**

## **Semi- Structured Interview Guide for International NGOs Officers in Zambia**

1. Have you always worked in the Education Sector?
2. For how long have you worked in the Education Sector?
3. Who are your target groups?
4. What criteria do you use when choosing local NGOs to fund?
5. What are the factors that hinder school aged children from accessing education in a)  
rural areas? b) urban areas?
6. Are you involved in education policy making in Zambia?
7. Are you involved in the implementation of the Basic Education policy?
8. Have you had significant impact on policy decisions in the Basic Education Sector in  
Zambia? Any examples?
9. How has NGO engagement in the area of education policy affected access to basic  
education?
10. How has NGO engagement in the area of education policy affected the quality of  
basic education?
11. What are the problems and challenges that you are facing in the implementation of the  
Basic Education Policy i.e. in trying to ensure that every school aged child enter and  
complete a full cycle of good quality basic education?
12. Suggest measures that would address the identified constraints/challenges in order to  
enhance Non-Organisations' participation in Basic Education Policy.

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH**

### **Interview Guide for Headteachers and Teachers**

1. Are children getting access to schooling?
2. Is education being provided to all school aged children?
3. How is the quality of education that is being provided?
4. What kind of role do NGOs play in Basic Education Policy Reform?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH

### **Focus Group Discussion Questions with Community Members**

1. What kind of role do NGOs play in Basic Education?
2. Are children getting access to schooling?
3. Is education being provided to all school aged children?
4. How is the quality of education that is being provided?



### **Semi- Structured Interview Guide for Donors**

1. a) How do you provide funding to the Ministry of Education?  
b) How has it worked?
2. What kind of role do you play in basic education policy?
3. How has your assistance influenced policy in the area of the quality of education?
4. How has your assistance influenced policy in the area of access to basic education?
5. In spite of your funding, why is it that we still have school aged children who do not have access to education?
6. What factors would contribute to the achievement of Education for All (EFA) by 2015?
7. As donors, you work with various stakeholders, among them NGOs, why NGOs?
8. What criteria do you use when choosing NGOs to fund?
9. From your own observations, over the past five years, are the funds allocated to NGOs increasing or decreasing?
10. How can the active participation of NGOs in influencing basic education policy reform enhance the achievement of EFA by 2015?

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH**

### **Semi-interview Guide for Academics**

1. Are NGOs regarded as key stakeholders in education policy making with regards basic education in Zambia?
2. Do NGOs influence policy in basic education in Zambia?
3. Is there a strong advocacy voice with regards basic education policy in Zambia?
4. Have NGOs in their advocacy work improved/expanded access to education?
5. Have NGOs in their advocacy work helped to improved quality of education?
6. How can the active participation of NGOs in education policy with regards basic education enhance the achievement of Education for All goals?
7. Will Zambia be able to provide universal primary education of good quality by 2015?
8. What factors would contribute to the achievement of EFA goals by 2015?

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## Appendix B: Patterns and Themes

Patterns	Themes					
Forms of NGO provision for Basic Education in Zambia	Service delivery	Advocacy				
Involvement of NGOs in education policy reform	Policy-making	Implementation				
How NGOs participate in policy reform in Zambia	Sector Advisory Group/ Projects Coordination Committee	Invitations from government	Coalition Formation	Advocacy activities	Demonstration/ experimentation	Policy briefing seminars/ research seminars
Reasons for influencing policy	Promote EFA	Make government accountable				
Effect on policy	Not sure	No impact	Impact			
Interactions Between NGOs and government	Partners	Types of relationships between NGOs and government	Factors determining the strength of the relationship between NGOs and government			
NGOs and donor priorities	Working with NGOs by donors	Sustainability of NGO projects/ programmes	Conditionalities			
How NGO engagement in education policy has affected education provision	NGOs and access to education	NGOs and quality of education				
Challenges faced by NGOs in service delivery and advocacy	Insufficient funding	Low staffing levels	Few advocacy NGOs	Duplication of work among NGOs		